

STORY-HOUR FAVORITES



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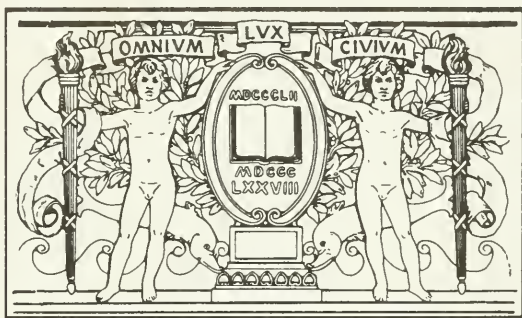
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STORY-HOUR FAVORITES

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AND HOME USE

COMPILED BY

WILHELMINA HARPER

Children's Librarian, Queensboro Public Library



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TO
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FOREWORD

The primary object of this collection of tales for telling or reading, is to bring together those stories of greatest value which can be used upon any occasion, and with any age of childhood.

Too often must the librarian, and the school teacher, enter upon a vain search in quest of suitable material for the Story Hour. The same problem confronts the parent in seeking "just the right story." Hence evolved my idea of putting under one cover those stories which meet such needs. Each one has been tested many times with large audiences of children.

The endeavor has been to gather the newer stories which combine the three main objects of the "Story Hour," namely: to give wholesome pleasure to the child, to stir his imagination, and to familiarize him with works of real literary merit.

Story telling, to-day, is recognized as one of the essential factors in the pedagogy of the child, and as a most valued art.

The amateur story teller will find her greatest inspiration in the response of her audience. Let her

choose the story which most strongly appeals to her; and if her sympathy for the child is sincere, if she can forget herself in the joy of giving him pleasure, it lies within her power to become a successful story teller.

We cannot too carefully select our stories in meeting the important demands of what the child *needs* and of what he *desires*. Too much stress cannot be laid upon this point. Today, our ever increasing Story Hour audiences are mainly composed of the older children. It is a distressing fact that they often have uninteresting and gruesome tales inflicted upon them, and the Story Hour's primary aim, of stimulating the child's mental vitality, is thus entirely lost.

G. Stanley Hall, an authority on child psychology, says: "Stories are the natural soul-food of children, their native air, and vital breath; but our children are too often either story-starved or charged with ill-chosen or ill-adapted twaddle tales."

Excellent books as guides in the art of story telling are those by Miss Marie Shedlock and Miss Carolyn Bailey.

My favorites have always been the animal stories. The potent charm which they exercise over the child's imagination and sympathy, is becoming recognized as a very valuable influence.

There are no better examples of such stories than

those by Rudyard Kipling. An exceptionally valued story of the same type is Miss Katharine Pyle's "How the Whale and Elephant were tricked." It gives keen delight to any audience. In fact, her stories are among those of greatest merit for children. Selections from her "Wonder Tales Retold" and "Fairy Tales from Many Lands" are well adapted for telling.

Then, there are the world-wide beloved "Uncle Remus" stories. They contain the sort of wholesome fun which appeals, and are most popular at Story Hour. The predicaments of "Brer Rabbit" are pictured by a master mind of humor. His chief character is the weakest and most harmless of animals and to quote the author: "It is not virtue that triumphs, but helplessness; it is not malice, but mischievousness."

Miss Bailey's "Rabbit Who Wanted Red Wings" especially pleases the younger children.

There can be found no tales of greater charm than those by Oscar Wilde. His "Happy Prince" is one of the most treasured for Story Hour purposes. Likewise, his "Selfish Giant" is one of the best of Easter stories.

Another of merit is Miss Tennant's "Water Nixie"; a story so individual and rare.

For real humor and delight let the child hear the entire story of "Pinocchio," which can be told in

parts; none will please him more. The especial value attached to this story is soon recognized by both parent and teacher.

Prof. Alden's "Why the Chimes Rang" is considered one of the most charming of Christmas stories. No audience tires of hearing it again and again. Others of equal interest are Miss Lagerlöf's "Legend of the Christmas Rose" and Eugene Field's "Coming of the Prince."

When Thanksgiving time approaches, let the child hear P. J. Stahl's "Kingdom of the Greedy" as an illustration of the "sufficiency" of a word to the wise.

The works of Seumas MacManus cannot be surpassed in Story Hour popularity. His inimitable humor is readily recognized and appreciated by all audiences.

For courtesies granted in the use of the above, and other stories, the compiler gratefully acknowledges indebtedness to:

Bobbs-Merrill Co. and to Prof. Alden, for "Why the Chimes Rang" by R. M. Alden.

To G. P. Putnam's Sons for "The Happy Prince" and "The Selfish Giant" from "Fairy Tales" by Oscar Wilde.

To The Century Co. and "St. Nicholas Magazine" for "Kingdom of the Greedy" by P. J. Stahl.

To Small, Maynard and Co., and Mrs. Julian Harris, for "How Brer Rabbit Saved Brer B'ar's Life" by Joel Chandler Harris.

To Miss Katharine Pyle for her version of "How the Elephant and the Whale Were Tricked," from her "Fairy Tales from Many Lands," published by E. P. Dutton.

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To Charles Scribner's Sons for "The Coming of the Prince" from "Christmas Tales" by Eugene Field.

To Doubleday Page and Co. for "Legend of Tutokanula" from "Child's Guide to Mythology" by

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WILHELMINA HARPER.

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I

THE WATER NIXIE

BY PAMELA TENNANT

STORY-HOUR FAVORITES

I

THE WATER NIXIE ¹

THE river was so clear because it was the home of a very beautiful Water Nixie who lived in it, and who sometimes could emerge from her home and sit in woman's form upon the bank. She had a dark green smock upon her, the color of the water-weed that waves as the water wills it, deep, deep down. And in her long wet hair were the white flowers of the water-violet, and she held a reed mace in her hand. Her face was very sad, because she had lived a long life, and known so many adventures, ever since she was a baby, which was nearly a hundred years ago. For creatures of the streams and trees live a long, long time, and when they die they lose themselves in Nature. That means that they are forever clouds, or trees, or rivers, and never have the form of men and women again.

¹ Reprinted by permission from Pamela Tennant's "The Children and the Pictures." Published by permission of the publisher, The Macmillan Company.

All water creatures would live, if they might choose it, in the sea, where they are born. It is in the sea they float hand-in-hand upon the crested billows, and sink deep in the great troughs of the strong waves, that are green as jade. They follow the foam and lose themselves in the wide ocean,—

“Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail with unshut eye;”

and they store in the Sea King's palace the golden phosphor of the sea.

But this Water Nixie had lost her happiness through not being good. She had forgotten many things that had been told her, and she had done many things that grieved others. She had stolen somebody else's property — quite a large bundle of happiness — which belonged elsewhere and not to her. Happiness is generally made to fit the person who owns it, just as do your shoes, or clothes; so when you take someone else's it's very little good to you, for it fits badly, and you can never forget it is n't yours.

So what with one thing and another this Water Nixie had to be punished, and the Queen of the Sea had banished her from the waves.

The punishment that can most affect Merfolk is to restrict their freedom. And this is how the Queen of the Sea punished the Nixie of our tale.

“You shall live for a long time in little places, where you will weary of yourself. You will learn to know yourself so well that everything you want will seem too good for you, and you will cease to claim it. And so, in time, you shall get free.”

Then the Nixie had to rise up and go away, and be shut into the fastness of a very small space, according to the words of the Queen. And this small space was — a tear.

At first she could hardly express her misery, and by thinking so continuously of the wildness and savour of the sea, she brought a dash of the brine with her, that makes the saltiness of our tears. She became many times smaller than her own stature; even then, by standing upright and spreading wide her arms, she touched with her finger-tips the walls of her tiny crystal home. How she longed that this tear might be wept and the walls of her prison shattered! But the owner of this tear was of a very proud nature, and she was so sad that tears seemed to her in no wise to express her grief.

She was a Princess who lived in a country that was not her home. What were tears to her? If she could have stood on the top of the very highest hill and with both hands caught the great winds of heaven, strong as they, and striven with them, perhaps she

might have felt as if she expressed all she knew. Or, if she could have torn down the stars from the heavens, or cast her mantle over the sun. But tears! Would they have helped to tell her sorrow? You cry if you soil your copy-book, don't you, or pinch your hand? So you may imagine the Nixie's home was a safe one, and she turned round and round in the captivity of that tear.

For twenty years she dwelt in that strong heart, till she grew to be accustomed to her cell. At last, in this wise came her release.

An old gipsy came one morning to the Castle and begged to see the Princess. She must see her, she cried. And the Princess came down the steps to meet her, and the gipsy gave her a small roll of paper in her hand. And the roll of paper smelt like honey as she took it, and it adhered to her palm as she opened it. There was little sign of writing on the paper, but in the midst of the page was a picture, small as the picture reflected in the iris of an eye. The picture showed a hill, with one tree on the sky-line, and a long road wound round the hill.

And suddenly in the Princess' memory a voice spoke to her. Many sounds she heard, gathered up into one great silence, like the quiet there is in forest spaces, when it is Summer and the green is deep: —

“Blessed are they that have the home longing,
For they shall go home.”

Then the Princess gave the gipsy two golden pieces, and went up to her chamber, and long that night she sat, looking out upon the sky.

She had no need to look upon the honeyed scroll, though she held it closely. Clearly before her did she see that small picture; the hill, and the tree, and the winding road, imaged as if mirrored in the iris of an eye. And in her memory she was upon that road, and the hill rose beside her, and the little tree was outlined, every twig of it, against the sky.

And as she saw all this, an overwhelming love of the place arose in her, a love of that certain bit of country that was so sharp and strong, that it stung and swayed her, as she leaned on the window-sill.

And because the love of a country is one of the deepest loves you may feel, the band of her control was loosened, and the tears came welling to her eyes. Up they brimmed and over, in salty rush and follow, dimming her eyes, magnifying everything, speared for a moment on her eyelashes, then shimmering to their fall. And at last came the tear that held the disobedient Nixie.

Splish! it fell. And she was free.

If you could have seen how pretty she looked stand-

ing there about the height of a grass-blade, wringing out her long wet hair. Every bit of moisture she wrung out of it, she was so glad to be quit of that tear. Then she raised her two arms above her in one delicious stretch, and if you had been the size of a mustard-seed perhaps you might have heard her laughing. Then she grew a little, and grew and grew, till she was about the height of a blue-bell, and as slender to see.

She stood looking at the splash on the window-sill that had been her prison so long, and then, with three steps of her bare feet, she reached the jessamine that was growing by the window, and by this she swung herself to the ground.

Away she sped over the dew-drenched meadows till she came to the running brook, and with all her longing in her out-stretched hands, she kneeled down by the crooked willows among all the comfry and the loosestrife, and the yellow irises, and the reeds.

Then she slid into the wide, cool stream.

II

WHY THE CHIMES RANG

By R. M. ALDEN

II

WHY THE CHIMES RANG ¹

THERE was once, in a far-away country where few people ever traveled, a wonderful church. It stood on a high hill in the midst of a great city; and every Sunday as well as on sacred days like Christmas, thousands of people climbed the hill to its great archways, looking like lines of ants all moving in the same direction.

When you came to the building itself, you found stone columns and dark passages, and a grand entrance leading to the main room of the church. This room was so long that one standing at the doorway could scarcely see to the other end, where the choir stood by the marble altar. In the farthest corner was the organ; and this organ was so loud, that sometimes when it played, the people for miles around would close their shutters and prepare for a great thunderstorm. Altogether, no such church as this was ever seen before, especially when it was lighted up for some festival, and crowded with people, young and old.

¹ From "Why the Chimes Rang and Ten Other Stories," copyright 1908. Used by special permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Co.

But the strangest thing about the whole building was the wonderful chime of bells.

At one corner of the church was a great gray tower, with ivy growing over it as far up as one could see. I say as far as one could see, because the tower was quite great enough to fit the great church, and it rose so far into the sky that it was only in very fair weather that any one claimed to be able to see the top. Even then one could not be certain that it was in sight. Up, and up, and up climbed the stones and the ivy; and, as the men who built the church had been dead for hundreds of years, every one had forgotten how high the tower was supposed to be.

Now all the people knew that at the top of the tower was a chime of Christmas bells. They had hung there ever since the church had been built, and were the most beautiful bells in the world. Some thought it was because a great musician had cast them and arranged them in their place; others said it was because of the great height, which reached up where the air was clearest and purest: however that might be, no one who had ever heard the chimes denied that they were the sweetest in the world. Some described them as sounding like angels far up in the sky; others, as sounding like strange winds singing through the trees.

But the fact was that no one had heard them for

years and years. There was an old man living not far from the church, who said that his mother had spoken of hearing them when she was a little girl, and he was the only one who was sure of as much as that. They were Christmas chimes, you see, and were not meant to be played by men or on common days. It was the custom on Christmas Eve for all the people to bring to the church their offerings to the Christ-child; and when the greatest and best offering was laid on the altar, there used to come sounding through the music of the choir the Christmas chimes far up in the tower. Some said that the wind rang them, and others that they were so high that the angels could set them swinging. But for many long years they had never been heard. It was said that people had been growing less careful of their gifts for the Christ-child, and that no offering was brought, great enough to deserve the music of the chimes.

Every Christmas Eve the rich people still crowded to the altar, each one trying to bring some better gift than any other, without giving anything that he wanted for himself, and the church was crowded with those who thought that perhaps the wonderful bells might be heard again. But although the service was splendid, and the offerings plenty, only the roar of the wind could be heard, far up in the stone tower.

Now, a number of miles from the city, in a little country village, where nothing could be seen of the great church but glimpses of the tower when the weather was fine, lived a boy named Pedro, and his little brother. They knew very little about the Christmas chimes, but they had heard of the service in the church on Christmas Eve, and had a secret plan, which they had often talked over when by themselves, to go to see the beautiful celebration.

“Nobody can guess, Little Brother,” Pedro would say, “all the fine things there are to see and hear; and I have even heard it said that the Christ-child sometimes comes down to bless the service. What if we could see Him?”

The day before Christmas was bitterly cold, with a few lonely snowflakes flying in the air, and a hard white crust on the ground. Sure enough, Pedro and Little Brother were able to slip quietly away early in the afternoon; and although the walking was hard in the frosty air, before nightfall they had trudged so far, hand in hand, that they saw the lights of the big city just ahead of them. Indeed they were about to enter one of the great gates in the wall that surrounded it, when they saw something dark on the snow near their path, and stepped aside to look at it.

It was a poor woman, who had fallen just outside

the city, too sick and tired to get in where she might have found shelter. The soft snow made of a drift a sort of pillow for her, and she would soon be so sound asleep, in the wintry air, that no one could ever waken her again. All this Pedro saw in a moment, and he knelt down beside her and tried to rouse her, even tugging at her arm a little, as though he would have tried to carry her away. He turned her face towards him, so that he could rub some of the snow on it, and when he looked at her silently a moment he stood up again and said:

“It’s no use, Little Brother. You will have to go on alone.”

“Alone?” cried Little Brother. “And you not see the Christmas festival?”

“No,” said Pedro, and he could not keep back a bit of a choking sound in his throat. “See this poor woman. Her face looks like the Madonna in the chapel window, and she will freeze to death if nobody cares for her. Every one has gone to the church now, but when you come back you can bring some one to help her. I will rub her to keep her from freezing, and perhaps get her to eat the bun that is left in my pocket.”

“But I can not bear to leave you, and go on alone,” said Little Brother.

“Both of us need not miss the service,” said Pedro, “and it had better be I than you. You can easily find your way to the church; and you must see and hear everything twice, Little Brother — once for you and once for me. I am sure the Christ-child must know how I should love to come with you and worship Him; and oh! if you get a chance, Little Brother, to slip up to the altar without getting in any one’s way, take this little silver piece of mine, and lay it down for my offering, when no one is looking. Do not forget where you have left me, and forgive me for not going with you.”

In this way he hurried Little Brother off to the city, and winked hard to keep back the tears, as he heard the crunching footsteps sounding farther and farther away in the twilight. It was pretty hard to lose the music and splendor of the Christmas celebration that he had been planning for so long, and spend the time instead in that lonely place in the snow.

The great church was a wonderful place that night. Every one said that it had never looked so bright and beautiful before. When the organ played and the thousands of people sang, the walls shook with the sound, and little Pedro, away outside the city wall, felt the earth tremble around him.

At the close of the service came the procession with

the offerings to be laid on the altar. Rich men and great men marched proudly up to lay down their gifts to the Christ-child. Some brought wonderful jewels, some baskets of gold so heavy that they could scarcely carry them down the aisle. A great writer laid down a book that he had been making for years and years. And last of all walked the king of the country, hoping with all the rest to win for himself the chime of the Christmas bells. There went a great murmur through the church, as the people saw the king take from his head the royal crown, all set with precious stones, and lay it gleaming on the altar, as his offering to the holy Child. "Surely," every one said, "we shall hear the bells now, for nothing like this has ever happened before."

But still only the cold old wind was heard in the tower, and the people shook their heads; and some of them said as they had before, that they never really believed the story of the chimes, and doubted if they ever rang at all.

The procession was over and the choir began the closing hymn. Suddenly the organist stopped playing as though he had been shot, and every one looked at the old minister, who was standing by the altar, holding up his hand for silence. Not a sound could be heard from any one in the church, but as all the people

strained their ears to listen, there came softly, but distinctly, swinging through the air, the sound of the chimes in the tower. So far away and yet so clear the music seemed — so much sweeter were the notes than anything that had been heard before, rising and falling away up there in the sky, that the people in the church sat for a moment as still as though something held each of them by the shoulders. Then they all stood up together and stared straight at the altar to see what great gift had awakened the long-silent bells.

But all that the nearest of them saw was the childish figure of Little Brother, who had crept softly down the aisle when no one was looking, and had laid Pedro's little piece of silver on the altar.

III

HOW THE ELEPHANT AND THE WHALE
WERE TRICKED

(Louisiana Creole Tale)

BY KATHARINE PYLE

III

HOW THE ELEPHANT AND THE WHALE WERE TRICKED

ONE time the rabbit and the ground hog went out to walk together. The rabbit wore his blue coat with brass buttons, for it was a fine day, and cocked his hat gayly over one eye, but the ground hog was content with his old fur overcoat, and galoshes to keep his feet dry.

They walked along until at last they came to the seashore, and there they saw the elephant standing talking to the whale. "Look!" said the ground hog; "that is a wonderful sight, for I reckon those are the two biggest animals in all the world."

"Let's go close and hear what they're talking about," said the rabbit.

"No, no," answered the ground hog. "They might not like it, and if I'm going to be impolite I'd rather be impolite to animals that are more my own size."

However, the rabbit was determined to know what two such big beasts talked to each other about, so he stole up close to them unnoticed, and hid back of a clump of grass to listen.

“Of all the beasts that walk the earth not one is as great as I am,” boasted the elephant. “The ground trembles at my tread; the trees shake and the other animals are afraid and hide lest I should be angry with them.”

“True, brother,” answered the whale. “On the other hand, there is not a fish in the sea that compares to me in size. I swallow hundreds at one gulp, and when I lash the waters with my tail it is like a storm.”

“And that is true, too,” answered the elephant. “Brother, how would it be if we claimed ourselves kings of the earth and sea, and made all of the other fish and animals our subjects?”

“That would be a fine scheme,” the whale agreed, “and then we would make them pay us tribute.”

The elephant was pleased with that idea, too. “Good! good!” he trumpeted. “That is what we will do.”

So the two beasts talked together, each one praising himself and the other, and saying how great they were.

The rabbit listened until he could bear it no longer, and then he stole back to the ground hog, his whiskers trembling with rage.

“Well, what were they talking about?” asked the ground hog.

“All their talk was of how great and powerful

they were," answered the rabbit, "and they say they will declare themselves kings and make us pay tribute. But I will show them a thing or two before that."

"What will you show them?" asked the other.

"I have thought of a trick to play upon them, and it is a trick that will make them feel so silly they will forget all about making kings of themselves."

The ground hog begged and entreated the rabbit not to think of such a thing. The whale and the elephant were too big and powerful for a little rabbit to try to play a trick upon them, and if he did, they would surely punish him. But the rabbit would not listen to him, and at last the ground hog rose and buttoned up his overcoat. "Well, I'm not going to get *myself* into trouble," he said. "I'm going home, I am, to look through the closets and get some tribute ready for them." So home he ambled, and did not mind one bit when the rabbit called after him that he was a coward.

But the rabbit made haste to the house of a neighbor to borrow a coil of rope he knew of, for that was the first thing he needed for his trick.

He got the rope and came back and hid in some bushes by the roadside. Presently he saw the elephant come swinging up the road. He had finished his talk with the whale and was now on his way home. He

looked very pleased with himself, and was smiling and idly breaking off the little trees with his trunk as he came.

The rabbit sprang out of the bushes with the coil of rope over his arm, and ran toward the elephant, shouting at the top of his lungs, "Help, help!"

The elephant stopped and looked at him with surprise. "What is the matter, Rabbit?" he asked.

"My cow! My cow has fallen into the quicksands down by the sea, and no one can get her out. Oh, dear good kind Master Elephant, if you would but help me! You are so great and strong and wonderful that it would be nothing at all for you to pull her out."

The elephant was very much pleased with these compliments to his strength. "Yes, I will help you," he said good-naturedly. "I am indeed very great and powerful. Come! Show me where she is."

"No need of that," answered the sly rabbit. "Do you stand here and hold this end of the rope, and I will run and tie the other end around her horns. When all is ready I will beat a drum. As soon as you hear that begin to pull and you will have her out in a twinkling."

The elephant agreed to do this; he took hold of the end of the rope and stood there, waiting and thinking

how strong he was, and how the animals were obliged to come to him when they needed help.

Meanwhile the rabbit ran down to the seashore with the other end of the rope. The whale was still there resting on the sand-bar, and thinking how great and powerful *he* was.

“Help! Help!” cried the rabbit as soon as he was near enough for the whale to hear him.

The great creature turned, and looked at him lazily. “What is the matter, Rabbit?” he asked.

“Oh, dear good Master Whale, I am in great trouble. My cow is stuck in a marsh and no one on land is powerful enough to pull her out. But you are so strong and wonderful that it would mean nothing to you to get her out for me.”

The whale was pleased at these words, but he said, “I am quite willing to help you, but I do not see how I can do so. I cannot leave the sea nor travel on dry land.”

“No need of that,” answered the rabbit. “I have tied the other end of this rope around her horns. If you will but take hold of this end you can pull her out in a twinkling.”

The good-natured whale was very ready to do this. “I must not pull too hard,” he said, “for so great is

my strength that I might not only jerk her out of the marsh but all the way into the sea so that she would be drowned."

"Yes, you must be careful about that," answered the rabbit, and then he ran up into the bushes where he had hidden a drum and beat it loudly.

As soon as the elephant heard the drum he began to pull on the rope. At first he did not pull hard, for he thought it was an easy task he had on hand. But the whale, holding the other end, started to swim out to sea, and the elephant found himself pulled down toward the shore. He was very much surprised, but he tightened his hold and began to use his strength.

And now it was the turn of the whale to be dragged toward the shore. "This will never do," he thought to himself, and he beat the waters, and swam with all his might and the elephant began to lose ground.

So the two creatures strove together. First one was dragged along and then the other. They thought they had never known of such a strong cow before. But the rabbit up in the bushes laughed and laughed until he thought his sides would split. He rolled upon the ground and the tears ran down his furry cheeks, and still, the more the huge beasts strove and grunted, the harder he laughed.

At last the great elephant put forth all his strength.

He dug his feet into the solid ground and braced himself. The whale in the sea had nothing to brace itself against, and so at last it was pulled up on the shore. Then the elephant turned to see what sort of a cow it was that weighed so much, and there was no cow at all, but his friend the whale, who lay there gasping and panting on the beach.

The elephant ran down to him, and the first thing he did was to push the whale back into the water again. Then they began to talk and explain to each other how it all happened. When they found what a trick the rabbit put upon them they were furiously angry, and consulted as to how they could best punish him.

“I,” said the whale, “shall send word to all the fish in streams and rivers, and tell them he must not be allowed to drink one drop of water.”

“And I,” said the elephant, “will send word to all the creatures on the earth that he shall not be allowed to eat so much as one blade of grass.”

And now the rabbit was in a bad way, indeed. If he went to the river to get a drink the fish and lobsters gathered in a crowd and drove him away. If he tried to eat, some animal or other was there to prevent him. It seemed as though he must die of hunger and thirst. His trick was like to cost him dear.

He was hopping along a path very sadly one day,

with his ears drooping and all the spirit gone out of him, when he came across a dead deer, that had been torn by the dogs. The rabbit stopped and scratched his ear and thought a bit. Then he set to work and very neatly stripped off the deerskin and drew it over his own body. Then he set out for the main road, limping and uttering cries of pain as he went.

Presently whom should he see but the elephant swinging along the road toward him.

The rabbit cried out still louder, and made out as though he could scarcely drag himself along for his wounds.

"What has happened to you, friend Deer? And who has wounded you in this way?" asked the elephant.

"Oh, that Rabbit! That Rabbit! And I was only doing as you told me."

"The Rabbit?"

"Yes; oh, indeed good Master Elephant, he is very terrible. He came to eat in the woods where I was and I tried to drive him away, because you had told us all to do that, but as soon as I spoke to him, he threw me down and almost tore me to pieces, as you see."

"That is strange," said the elephant. "I did not know he was as strong as that."

“Oh, yes; he is small, but he knows much magic. No one could stand against him, not even you. And he is very angry. He says he is going to tear you to pieces too, and the whale, and he only left me alive so that I might come and tell you.”

“But he will not kill *me!*” cried the elephant.

“His magic is very strong. I am afraid, now that he is angry, that he will kill all the animals in the world, and keep it for himself.”

Now the elephant really began to be afraid. “Oh, well, it was only a joke that the whale and I played on him. Go back and tell him so. Tell him it was only a joke, and that I am not angry with him now. Then tell him he may eat wherever he pleases, for I would not want to annoy such a little animal as he is.”

So the rabbit, still speaking like the deer, said he would, and, moaning and limping, he turned and crawled back the way he had come. But when he was safely out of sight, he fell down in the dust of the road and laughed and laughed till he was sick with laughing.

IV

THE HAPPY PRINCE

BY OSCAR WILDE

IV

THE HAPPY PRINCE

HIGH above the city, on a tall column, stood the statue of the Happy Prince. He was gilded all over with thin leaves of fine gold, for eyes he had two bright sapphires, and a large red ruby glowed on his sword-hilt.

He was very much admired indeed. "He is as beautiful as a weathercock," remarked one of the Town Councillors who wished to gain a reputation for having artistic tastes; "only not quite so useful," he added, fearing lest people should think him unpractical, which he really was not.

"Why can't you be like the Happy Prince?" asked a sensible mother of her little boy, who was crying for the moon. "The Happy Prince never dreams of crying for anything."

"I am glad there is some one in the world who is quite happy," muttered a disappointed man as he gazed at the wonderful statue.

"He looks just like an angel," said the charity children as they came out of the cathedral in their

bright scarlet cloaks and their clean white pinafores.

“How do you know?” said the Mathematical Master. “You have never seen one.”

“Ah! but we have in our dreams,” answered the children; and the Mathematical Master frowned and looked very severe, for he did not approve of children dreaming.

One night there flew over the city a little Swallow. His friends had gone away to Egypt six weeks before, but he had stayed behind. . . . “Where shall I put up?” he said; “I hope the town has made preparations.”

Then he saw the statue on the tall column. “I will put up there,” he cried; “it is a fine position with plenty of fresh air.” So he alighted just between the feet of the Happy Prince.

“I have a golden bedroom,” he said softly to himself as he looked around, and he prepared to go to sleep; but just as he was putting his head under his wing a large drop of water fell on him. “What a curious thing!” he cried; “there is not a single cloud in the sky, the stars are quite clear and bright, and yet it is raining. The climate in the north of Europe is really dreadful.”

Then another drop fell. “What is the use of a statue if it cannot keep the rain off?” he said. “I

must look for a good chimney-pot," and he determined to fly away.

But before he had opened his wings a third drop fell, and he looked up, and saw — Ah! what did he see?

The eyes of the Happy Prince were filled with tears and tears were running down his golden cheeks. His face was so beautiful in the moonlight that the little Swallow was filled with pity.

"Who are you?" he said.

"I am the Happy Prince."

"Why are you weeping then?" asked the Swallow; "you have quite drenched me."

"When I was alive and had a human heart," answered the statue, "I did not know what tears were, for I lived in the Palace of Sans Souci, where sorrow is not allowed to enter. In the daytime I played with my companions in the garden, and in the evening I led the dance in the Great Hall. Round the garden ran a very lofty wall, but I never cared to ask what lay beyond it, everything about me was so beautiful. My courtiers called me the Happy Prince, and indeed I was, if pleasure be happiness. So I lived, and so I died. And now that I am dead they have set me up here so high that I can see all the ugliness and all the misery of my city, and though my heart is made of lead yet I cannot choose but weep."

“What, is he not solid gold?” said the Swallow to himself. He was too polite to make any personal remarks out loud.

“Far away,” continued the statue in a low musical voice, “far away in a little street there is a poor house. One of the windows is open, and through it I can see a woman seated at a table. Her face is thin and worn, and she has coarse, red hands, all pricked by the needle, for she is a seamstress. She is embroidering passion-flowers on a satin gown for the loveliest of the Queen’s maids-of-honour to wear at the next court ball. In a bed in the corner of the room her little boy is lying ill. He has a fever, and is asking for oranges. His mother has nothing to give him but river water, so he is crying. Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, will you not bring her the ruby out of my sword hilt? My feet are fastened to this pedestal and I cannot move.”

“I am waited for in Egypt,” said the Swallow. “My friends are flying up and down the Nile, and talking to the large lotus-flowers. Soon they will go to sleep in the tomb of the great King.” . . . “Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,” said the Prince, “will you not stay with me for one night, and be my messenger? The boy is so thirsty and the mother so sad.”

“I don’t think I like boys,” answered the Swallow.

“Last summer, when I was staying on the river, there were two rude boys, the miller’s sons, who were always throwing stones at me. They never hit me, of course; we swallows fly far too well for that, and, besides, I come of a family famous for its agility; but still, it was a mark of disrespect.”

But the Happy Prince looked so sad that the little Swallow was sorry. “It is very cold here,” he said; “but I will stay with you for one night and be your messenger.”

“Thank you, little Swallow,” said the Prince.

So the Swallow picked out the great ruby from the Prince’s sword, and flew away with it in his beak over the roofs of the town.

He passed by the cathedral tower, where the white marble angels were sculptured. He passed the palace and heard the sound of dancing. A beautiful girl came out on the balcony with her lover. “How wonderful the stars are,” he said to her “and how wonderful is the power of love!” “I hope my dress will be ready in time for the State ball,” she answered; “I have ordered passion-flowers to be embroidered on it; but the seamstresses are so lazy.”

He passed over the river, and saw the lanterns hanging to the masts of the ships. He passed over the Ghetto, and saw the old Jews bargaining with each

other, and weighing out money in copper scales. At last he came to the poor house and looked in. The boy was tossing feverishly on his bed, and the mother had fallen asleep, she was so tired. In he hopped, and laid the great ruby on the table beside the woman's thimble. Then he flew gently round the bed, fanning the boy's forehead with his wings. "How cool I feel," said the boy; "I must be getting better," and he sank into a delicious slumber.

Then the Swallow flew back to the Happy Prince, and told him what he had done. "It is curious," he remarked, "but I feel quite warm now, although it is so cold."

"That is because you have done a good action," said the Prince. And the little Swallow began to think, and then he fell asleep. Thinking always made him sleepy.

When day broke he flew down to the river and had a bath. "What a remarkable phenomenon," said the Professor of Ornithology as he was passing over the bridge. "A swallow in winter!" and he wrote a long letter about it to the local newspaper. Every one quoted it, it was full of so many words that they could not understand.

"To-night I go to Egypt," said the Swallow, and he was in high spirits at the prospect. He visited all

the public monuments, and sat a long time on top of the church steeple. Wherever he went Sparrows chirruped, and said to each other, "What a distinguished stranger!" so he enjoyed himself very much.

When the moon rose he flew back to the Happy Prince. "Have you any commissions for Egypt?" he cried. "I am just starting."

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "will you not stay with me one night longer?"

"I am waited for in Egypt," answered the Swallow. "To-morrow my friends will fly up to the Second Cataract. The river-horse crouches there among the bulrushes, and on a great granite throne sits the God Memnon. All night long he watches the stars, and when the morning star shines he utters one cry of joy, and then he is silent. At noon the yellow lions come down to the water's edge to drink. They have eyes like green beryls, and their roar is louder than the roar of the cataract."

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "far away across the city I see a young man in a garret. He is leaning over a desk covered with papers, and in a tumbler by his side there is a bunch of withered violets. His hair is brown and crisp, and his lips are red as a pomegranate, and he has large and dreamy eyes. He is trying to finish a play for

the Director of the Theatre, but he is too cold to write any more. There is no fire in the grate, and hunger has made him faint."

"I will wait with you one night longer," said the Swallow who really had a good heart. "Shall I take him another ruby?"

"Alas! I have no ruby now," said the Prince; "my eyes are all that I have left. They are made of rare sapphires, which were brought out of India a thousand years ago. Pluck out one of them and take it to him. He will sell it to the jeweller, and buy food and firewood, and finish his play."

"Dear Prince," said the Swallow, "I cannot do that"; and he began to weep.

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "do as I command you."

So the Swallow plucked out the Prince's eye, and flew away to the student's garret. It was easy enough to get in, as there was a hole in the roof. Through this he darted, and came into the room. The young man had his head buried in his hands, so he did not hear the flutter of the bird's wings, and when he looked up he found the beautiful sapphire lying on the withered violets.

"I am beginning to be appreciated," he cried; "this

is from some great admirer. Now I can finish my play," and he looked quite happy.

The next day the Swallow flew down to the harbor. He sat on the mast of a large vessel and watched the sailors hauling big chests out of the hold with ropes. "Heave ahoy!" they shouted as each chest came up.

"I am going to Egypt!" cried the Swallow, but nobody minded, and when the moon rose he flew back to the Prince.

"I am come to bid you good-bye," he cried. "Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "will you not stay with me one night longer?"

"It is winter," answered the Swallow, "and the chill snow will soon be here. In Egypt the sun is warm on the green palmtrees, and the crocodiles lie in the mud and look lazily about them. My companions are building a nest in the Temple of Baalbeck, and the pink and white doves are watching them, and cooing to each other. Dear Prince, I must leave you, but I will never forget you, and next spring I will bring you back two beautiful jewels in place of those you have given away. The ruby shall be redder than a red rose, and the sapphire shall be as blue as the great sea."

"In the square below," said the Happy Prince, "there stands a little match-girl. She has let her

matches fall in the gutter, and they are all spoiled. Her father will beat her if she does not bring home some money, and she is crying. She has no shoes or stockings, and her little head is bare. Pluck out my other eye, and give it to her, and her father will not beat her."

"I will stay with you one night longer," said the Swallow, "but I cannot pluck out your eye. You would be quite blind then."

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "do as I command you."

So he plucked out the Prince's other eye and darted down with it. He swooped past the match-girl, and slipped the jewel into her hand. "What a lovely bit of glass," cried the little girl; and she ran home, laughing.

Then the Swallow came back to the Prince. "You are blind now," he said, "so I will stay with you always."

"No, little Swallow," said the poor Prince, "you must go away to Egypt."

"I will stay with you always," said the Swallow, and he slept at the Prince's feet.

All the next day he sat on the Prince's shoulder and told him stories of what he had seen in strange lands. He told him of the red ibises, who stand in long rows

on the banks of the Nile and catch gold-fish in their beaks; of the Sphinx, who is as old as the world itself, and lives in the desert, and knows everything; of the merchants who walk slowly by the side of their camels, and carry amber beads in their hands; of the King of the Mountains of the Moon, who is as black as ebony, and worships a large crystal; of the great green snake that sleeps in a palm-tree, and has twenty priests to feed it with honey-cakes, and of the pygmies who sail over a big lake on large flat leaves, and are always at war with the butterflies.

“Dear little Swallow,” said the Prince, “you tell me of marvellous things, but more marvellous than anything is the suffering of men and women. There is no Mystery so great as Misery. Fly over my city, little Swallow, and tell me what you see there.”

So the Swallow flew over the great city, and saw the rich making merry in their beautiful houses, while the beggars were sitting at the gates. He flew into dark lanes, and saw the white faces of starving children looking out listlessly at the black streets. Under the archway of a bridge two little boys were lying in one another's arms to try and keep themselves warm. “How hungry we are!” they said. “You must not lie here,” shouted the watchman, and they wandered out into the rain.

Then he flew back and told the Prince what he had seen.

“I am covered with fine gold,” said the Prince; “you must take it off leaf by leaf, and give it to the poor; the living always think that gold can make them happy.”

Leaf after leaf of the fine gold the Swallow picked off, till the Happy Prince looked quite dull and grey. Leaf after leaf of the fine gold he brought to the poor, and the children’s faces grew rosier, and they laughed and played games in the street. “We have bread now!” they cried.

Then the snow came, and after the snow came the frost. The streets looked as if they were made of silver, they were so bright and glistening; long icicles like crystal daggers hung down from the eaves of the houses, everybody went about in furs, and the little boys wore scarlet caps and skated on the ice.

The poor little Swallow grew colder and colder, but he would not leave the Prince; he loved him too well. He picked up crumbs outside the baker’s door when the baker was not looking, and tried to keep himself warm by flapping his wings.

But at last he knew that he was going to die. He had just strength to fly up to the Prince’s shoulder

once more. "Good-bye, dear Prince!" he murmured. "Will you let me kiss your hand?"

"I am glad that you are going to Egypt at last, little Swallow," said the Prince, "you have stayed too long here; but you must kiss me on the lips, for I love you."

"It is not to Egypt that I am going," said the Swallow. "I am going to the House of Death. Death is the brother of Sleep, is he not?"

And he kissed the Happy Prince on the lips, and fell down dead at his feet.

At that moment a curious crack sounded inside the statue as if something had broken. The fact is that the leaden heart had snapped right in two. It certainly was a dreadfully hard frost.

Early the next morning the Mayor was walking in the square below in company with the Town Councilors. As they passed the column he looked up at the statue. "Dear me! how shabby the Happy Prince looks!" he said.

"How shabby indeed!" cried the Town Councilors, who always agreed with the Mayor, and they went up to look at it.

"The ruby has fallen out of his sword, his eyes are gone, and he is golden no longer," said the Mayor;

"He is little better than a beggar!" said the Town Councillors.

"And here is actually a dead bird at his feet!" continued the Mayor. "We must really issue a proclamation that birds are not allowed to die here." And the Town Clerk made a note of the suggestion.

So they pulled down the statue of the Happy Prince. "As he is no longer beautiful he is no longer useful," said the Art Professor at the University.

Then they melted the statue in a furnace, and the Mayor held a meeting of the Corporation to decide what was to be done with the metal. "We must have another statue, of course," he said, "and it shall be a statue of myself."

"Of myself," said each of the Town Councillors, and they quarrelled. When I last heard of them they were quarrelling still.

"What a strange thing!" said the overseer of the workmen at the foundry. "This broken lead heart will not melt in the furnace. We must throw it away." So they threw it on a dust-heap where the dead Swallow was also lying.

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"Bring me the two most precious things in the city," said God to one of His angels; and the Angel brought him the leaden heart and the dead bird.

“You have rightly chosen,” said God, “for in my garden of Paradise this little bird shall sing forevermore, and in my city of gold the Happy Prince shall praise me.”

V

HOW BRER RABBIT SAVED BRER B'AR'S
LIFE

BY JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS

V

HOW BRER RABBIT SAVED BRER B'AR'S LIFE ¹

JUST above the spring, on the home-place, there was a large over-hanging rock that was a source of great interest to the little boy. He wondered how it grew there, he wondered if it had anything to do with the water-supply that bubbled beneath it, and when he had forgotten to wonder about one thing, he speedily began to wonder about something else concerning the rock — whether there was a gold mine beneath it, or a cavern, and if this were so, whether a door would fly open if some particular word or phrase was said. It presented a problem to the youngster that he could not long escape from; and it was so interesting in all its parts and particulars that it would be well if some of our noisy modern scientists would leave their foolish speculations, go to the old plantation, and there contemplate the puzzle presented by the

¹ From "Uncle Remus and the Little Boy," by Joel Chandler Harris, copyright 1910 by Small, Maynard and Co., Incorporated, reprinted by permission of the publishers.

hanging rock. The little boy asked Uncle Remus about it more than once, and he was so persistent in recurring to the matter that the old man finally told him a story about it.

“Ef I ain’t mighty much mistook’n,” he said, “dat ar rock is de ve’y one what Brer Rabbit fool some er de creeturs wid. I dunno ef ’twuz Brer B’ar er Brer Fox, but we’ll say dat ’twuz ol’ Brer B’ar, an’ let it go at dat. In one way an’ anudder, Brer Rabbit wuz all de time a-pesterin’ de yuther creeturs, pullin’ der tails an’ runnin’ off, er makin’ jokes ’bout um, er playin’ pranks on um.

“Ef you been follerin’ me ’long dis fur, you know dat-some er de pranks dat ol’ Brer Rabbit played on de creeturs got um in deep trouble. Ol’ Brer B’ar ain’t got no tail fer ter be pulled, but he had feelin’s fer ter be hurted. I dunner what Brer Rabbit done ter him at dis intickler time, but he done sump’n, an’ I speck ’twuz a-plenty. Anyhow, Brer B’ar got right behime Brer Rabbit, an’ he pusht him so close, dat befo’ Brer Rabbit kin git in a holler-tree, Brer B’ar ketched him by de behime leg an’ helt ’im. He try fer ter pull ’im out, but Brer Rabbit kinder brace hise’f ag’in de inside, an’ dar he wuz. He stick his head ez fur up de holler ez he kin an’ den he laugh an’ say, sezee :

“ ‘ You think you got me, don’t you, Brer B’ar? Well, you ain’t; dat what youer pullin’ an’ tuggin’ at ain’t nothin’ but a last year’s sprout growin’ out’n de groun’ in here. Ef you think it’s my behime leg, des git a rock an’ hit, an’ hit, an’ you ’ll see dat I won’t flinch.’

“ Brer B’ar looked aroun’ fer ter fin’ a rock, but dar wan’t none right at han’, an’ so he went off fer ter git one. Time he come back, he say, sezee, ‘ Whar de sprout, Brer Rabbit?’

“ Brer Rabbit, he ’spon’, sezee, ‘ I thought you want comin’ back, Brer B’ar, an’ I tuck’n broke it off so I kin take it ter my ol’ ’oman fer ter make a toof-bresh out’n; she ’ll like it fine!’

“ I speck,” Uncle Remus went on, looking curiously at the child, “ dat dat holler-tree must ’a’ ben up dar in de pastur’ whar de barn is, an’ ef dat ’s so, we kin foller de tale wid bofe eyes an’ min’. When Brer Rabbit come out’n de holler fer ter go home, he know’d in reason dat Brer B’ar wuz some’rs close about watchin’ fer ’im. He crope out, he did, an’ look all ’roun’, an’ den he made a dash fer de open, but ol’ Brer B’ar wuz right at han’, an’ when Brer Rabbit made his dash, Brer B’ar made one too, an’ he wuz so servigrous dat Brer Rabbit hatter run un’ dat hangin’ rock dat ’s been a-pesterin’ you. He run un’ dar, he did, an’ Brer B’ar

retched fer 'im, an' he come so close ter gittin' 'im dat he 'uz skeer'd mighty nigh col'.

“ He holler out, he did. ‘ Look out dar, Brer B'ar! I feel dis rock a-fallin' ! It 'll git me, but it 'll git you, too, an' den what good is yo' temper gwine do you? Don't you feel it sinkin' down? Go git sump'n fer ter prop it up wid! I don't min' gittin' ketched myse'f, but I don't wanter set here an' see you mashed ez flat ez a battercake! ’

“ An' so Brer B'ar, he run off fer ter get a pole fer ter prop up de rock wid, an' when he come back, Brer Rabbit wuz done gone, an' 'twuz many a long day 'fo' he seed 'im ag'in.”

The little boy sat reflecting, and finally he said:

“ Well I knew there was something curious about the rock.”

Whereupon, Uncle Remus closed his eyes and held them so until the child slipped out of the house and went to play.

VI

THE KINGDOM OF THE GREEDY

(A Story for Thanksgiving)

FROM THE FRENCH BY P. J. STAHL

VI

THE KINGDOM OF THE GREEDY

THE country of the Greedy, well known in history, was ruled by a king who had much trouble. His subjects were well-behaved, but they had one sad fault: they were too fond of pies and tarts. It was as disagreeable to them to swallow a spoonful of soup as if it were so much sea-water, and it would take a policeman to make them open their mouths for a bit of meat, either boiled or roasted. This deplorable taste made the fortunes of the pastry cooks, but also of the apothecaries. Families ruined themselves in pills and powders; camomile, rhubarb, and peppermint trebled in price, as well as other disagreeable remedies, such as castor —— which I will not name.

The King of the Greedy sought long for the means of correcting this fatal passion for sweets, but even the faculty were puzzled.

“Your Majesty,” said the great court doctor, Olibriers, at his last audience, “your people look like putty! They are incurable; their senseless love for good eating will bring them all to the grave.”

This view of things did not suit the King. He was wise, and saw very plainly that a monarch without subjects would be but a sorry king.

Happily, after this utter failure of the doctors, there came into the mind of His Majesty a first-class idea: he telegraphed for Mother Mitchel, the most celebrated of all pastry cooks. Mother Mitchel soon arrived, with her black cat, Fanfreluche, who accompanied her everywhere. He was an incomparable cat. He had not his equal as an adviser and a taster of tarts.

Mother Mitchel having respectfully inquired what she and her cat could do for His Majesty, the King demanded of the astonished pastry cook a tart as big as the capitol — bigger even, if possible, but no smaller. When the King uttered this astounding order, deep emotion was shown by the chamberlains, the pages, and lackeys. Nothing but the respect due to his presence prevented them from crying “Long live Your Majesty!” in his very ears. But the King had seen enough of the enthusiasm of the populace, and did not allow such sounds in the recesses of his palace.

The King gave Mother Mitchel one month to carry out his gigantic project. “It is enough,” she proudly replied, brandishing her crutch. Then, taking leave of the King, she and her cat set out for their home.

On the way Mother Mitchel arranged in her head

the plan of the monument which was to immortalize her, and considered the means of executing it. As to its form and size, it was to be as exact a copy of the capitol as possible, since the King had willed it; but its outside crust should have a beauty all its own. The dome must be adorned with sugar plums of all colors, and surmounted by a splendid crown of macaroons, spun sugar, chocolate, and candied fruits. It was no small affair.

Mother Mitchel did not like to lose her time. Her plan of battle once formed, she recruited on her way all the little pastry cooks of the country, as well as all the tiny six-year-olds who had a sincere love for the noble callings of scullion and apprentice. There was plenty of these, as you may suppose, in the country of the Greedy; Mother Mitchel had her pick of them.

Mother Mitchel, with the help of her crutch and of Fanfreluche, who miaowed loud enough to be heard twenty miles off, called upon all the millers of the land and commanded them to bring together at a certain time as many sacks of fine flour as they could grind in a week. There were only windmills in that country; you may easily believe how they all began to go. B-r-r-r-r-r! What a noise they made! The clatter was so great that all the birds flew away to other climes, and even the clouds fled from the sky.

At the call of Mother Mitchel all the farmers' wives were set to work; they rushed to the hencoops to collect the seven thousand fresh eggs that Mother Mitchel wanted for her great edifice. Deep was the emotion of the fowls. The hens were inconsolable, and the unhappy creatures mourned upon the palings for the loss of all their hopes.

The milkmaids were busy from morning till night in milking cows. Mother Mitchel must have twenty thousand pails of milk. All the little calves were put on half rations. This great work was nothing to them, and they complained pitifully to their mothers. Many of the cows protested with energy against this unreasonable tax, which made their young families so uncomfortable. There were pails upset, and even some milkmaids went head over heels. But these little accidents did not chill the enthusiasm of the labourers.

And now Mother Mitchel called for a thousand pounds of the best butter. All the churns for twenty miles around began to work in the most lively manner. Their dashers dashed without ceasing, keeping perfect time. The butter was tasted, rolled into pats, wrapped up, and put into baskets. Such energy had never been known before.

Mother Mitchel passed for a sorceress. It was all because of her cat, Fanfreluche, with whom she had

mysterious doings and pantomimes, and with whom she talked in her inspired moments, as if he were a real person. Certainly, since the famous "Puss in Boots," there had never been an animal so extraordinary; and credulous folks suspected him of being a magician. Some curious people had the courage to ask Fanfreluche if this were true; but he replied by bristling, and showing his teeth and claws so fiercely, that the conversation had ended there. Sorceress or not, Mother Mitchel was always obeyed. No one else was ever served so punctually.

On the appointed day all the millers arrived with their asses trotting in single file, each laden with a great sack of flour. Mother Mitchel, after having examined the quality of the flour, had every sack accurately weighed. This was head work and hard work, and took time; but Mother Mitchel was untiring, and her cat, also, for while the operation lasted he sat on the roof watching. It is only just to say that the millers of the Greedy Kingdom brought flour not only faultless but of full weight. They knew that Mother Mitchel was not joking when she said that others must be exact with her as she was with them. Perhaps also they were a little afraid of the cat, whose great green eyes were always shining upon them like two round lamps, and never lost sight of them for one moment.

All the farmers' wives arrived in turn, with baskets of eggs upon their heads. They did not load their donkeys with them, for fear that in joggling along they would become omelettes on the way. Mother Mitchel received them with her usual gravity. She had the patience to look through every egg to see if it were fresh.

She did not wish to run the risk of having young chickens in a tart that was destined for those who could not bear the taste of any meat however tender and delicate. The number of eggs was complete, and again Mother Mitchel and her cat had nothing to complain of. This Greedy nation, though carried away by love of good eating, was strictly honest. It must be said that where nations are patriotic, desire for the common good makes them unselfish. Mother Mitchel's tart was to be the glory of the country and each one was proud to contribute to such a great work.

And now the milkmaids with their pots and pails of milk, and the butter-makers with their baskets filled with the rich yellow pats of butter, filed in long procession to the right and left of the cabin of Mother Mitchel. There was no need for her to examine so carefully the butter and the milk. She had such a delicate nose that if there had been a single pat of ancient butter or a pail of sour milk she would have

pounced upon it instantly. But all was perfectly fresh. In that golden age they did not understand the art, now so well known, of making milk out of flour and water. Real milk was necessary to make cheese-cakes and ice cream and other delicious confections much adored in the Greedy Kingdom. If any one had made such a despicable discovery, he would have been chased from the country as a public nuisance.

Then came the grocers, with their aprons of coffee bags, and with the jolly, mischievous faces the rogues always have. Each one clasped to his heart a sugar loaf nearly as large as himself, whose summit, without its paper cap, looked like new-fallen snow upon a pyramid. Mother Mitchel, with her crutch for a baton, saw them all placed in her storerooms upon shelves put up for the purpose. She had to be very strict, for some of the little fellows could hardly part from their merchandise, and many were indiscreet, with their tongues behind their mountains of sugar. If they had been let alone, they would never have stopped till the sugar was all gone. But they had not thought of the implacable eye of old Fanfreluche, who, posted upon a water spout, took note of all their misdeeds. From another quarter came a whole army of country people, rolling wheelbarrows and carrying huge baskets, all filled with cherries, plums, peaches, apples, and pears.

All these fruits were so fresh, in such perfect condition, with their fair shining skins, that they looked like wax or painted marble, but their delicious perfume proved that they were real. Some little people, hidden in the corners, took pains to find this out. Between ourselves, Mother Mitchel made believe not to see them, and took the precaution of holding Fanfreluche in her arms so that he could not spring upon them. The fruits were all put into bins, each kind by itself. And now the preparations were finished. There was no time to lose before setting to work.

The spot which Mother Mitchel had chosen for her great edifice was a pretty hill on which a plateau formed a splendid site. This hill commanded the capitol city, built upon the slope of another hill close by. After having beaten down the earth till it was smooth as a floor, they spread over it loads of bread crumbs, brought from the baker's, and levelled it with rake and spade, as we do gravel in our garden walks. Little birds, as greedy as themselves, came in flocks to the feast, but they might eat as they liked, it would never be missed, so thick was the carpet. It was a great chance for the bold little things.

All the ingredients for the tart were now ready. Upon order of Mother Mitchel they began to peel the apples and pears and to take out the pits. The weather

was so pleasant that the girls sat out of doors, upon the ground, in long rows. The sun looked down upon them with a merry face. Each of the little workers had a big earthen pan, and peeled incessantly the apples which the boys brought them. When the pans were full, they were carried away and others were brought. They had also to carry away the peels, or the girls would have been buried in them. Never was there such a peeling before.

Not far away, the children were stoning the plums, cherries and peaches. This work, being the easiest, was given to the youngest and most inexperienced hands, which were all first carefully washed, for Mother Mitchel, though not very particular about her own toilet, was very neat in her cooking. The school-house, long unused (for in the country of Greedy they had forgotten everything), was arranged for the second class of workers, and the cat was their inspector. He walked round and round, growling if he saw the fruit popping into any of the little mouths. If they had dared, how they would have pelted him with plum stones! But no one risked it. Fanfreluche was not to be trifled with.

In those days powdered sugar had not been invented, and to grate it all was no small affair. It was the work that the grocers used to dislike most; both lungs and

arms were soon tired. But Mother Mitchel was there to sustain them with her unequalled energy. She chose the laborers from the most robust of the boys. With mallet and knife she broke the cones into round pieces, and they grated them till they were too small to hold. The bits were put into baskets to be pounded. One would never have expected to find all the thousand pounds of sugar again. But a new miracle was wrought by Mother Mitchel. It was all there!

It was then the turn of the ambitious scullions to enter the lists and break the seven thousand eggs for Mother Mitchel. It was not hard to break them — any fool could do that; but to separate adroitly the yolks and the whites demands some talent, and, above all, great care. We dare not say that there were no accidents here, no eggs too well scrambled, no baskets upset. But the experience of Mother Mitchel had counted upon such things, and it may truly be said that there were never so many eggs broken at once, or ever could be again. To make an omelette of them would have taken a saucepan as large as a skating pond, and the fattest cook that ever lived could not hold the handle of such a saucepan.

But this was not all. Now that the yolks and whites were once divided, they must each be beaten separately in wooden bowls, to give them the necessary

lightness. The egg beaters were marshalled into two big brigades, the yellow and the white. Every one preferred the white for it was much more amusing to make those snowy masses that rose up so high than to beat the yolks, which knew no better than to mix together like so much sauce. Mother Mitchel, with her usual wisdom, had avoided this difficulty by casting lots. Thus, those who were not on the white side had no reason to complain of oppression. And truly, when all was done, the white and the yellows were equally tired. All had cramps in their hands.

Now began the real labor of Mother Mitchel. Till now she had been the commander-in-chief — the head only; now she put her own finger in the pie. First, she had to make the sweetmeats and jam out of all the immense quantity of fruit she had stored. For this, as she could only do one kind at a time, she had ten kettles, each as big as a dinner table. During forty-eight hours the cooking went on; a dozen scullions blew the fire and put on the fuel. Mother Mitchel, with a spoon that four modern cooks could hardly lift, never ceased stirring and trying the boiling fruit. Three expert tasters, chosen from the most dainty, had orders to report progress every half hour.

It is unnecessary to state that all the sweetmeats were perfectly successful, or that they were of exquisite

consistency, color and perfume. With Mother Mitchel there was no such word as *fail*. When each kind of sweetmeat was finished, she skimmed it, and put it away to cool in enormous bowls before potting. She did not use for this the usual little glass or earthen jars, but great stone ones, like those in the "Forty Thieves." Not only did these take less time to fill, but they were safe from the children. The scum and the scrapings were something, to be sure. But there was little Toto, who thought this was not enough. He would have jumped into one of the bowls if they had not held him.

Mother Mitchel, who thought of everything, had ordered two hundred great kneading troughs, wishing that all the utensils of this great work should be perfectly new. These two hundred troughs, like her other materials, were all delivered punctually and in good order. The pastry cooks rolled up their sleeves and began to knead the dough with cries of "Hi! Hi!" that could be heard for miles. It was odd to see this army of bakers in serried ranks, all making the same gestures at once, like well-disciplined soldiers, stooping and rising together in time, so that a foreign ambassador wrote to his court that he wished his people could load and fire as well as these could knead. Such praise a people never forgets.

When each troughful of paste was approved it was moulded with care into the form of bricks, and with the aid of the engineer-in-chief, a young genius who had gained the first prize in the school of architecture, the majestic edifice was begun. Mother Mitchel herself drew the plan; in following her directions, the young engineer showed himself modest beyond all praise. He had the good sense to understand that the architecture of tarts and pies had rules of its own, and that therefore the experience of Mother Mitchel was worth all the scientific theories in the world.

The inside of the monument was divided into as many compartments as there were kinds of fruits. The walls were no less than four feet thick. When they were finished, twenty-four ladders were set up, and twenty-four experienced cooks ascended them. These first-class artists were each of them armed with an enormous cooking spoon. Behind them, on the lower rounds of the ladders, followed the kitchen boys, carrying on their heads pots and pans filled to the brim with jam and sweetmeats, each sort ready to be poured into its destined compartment. This colossal labor was accomplished in one day, and with wonderful exactness.

When the sweetmeats were used to the last drop, when the great spoons had done all their work, the

twenty-four cooks descended to earth again. The intrepid Mother Mitchel, who had never quitted the spot, now ascended, followed by the noble Fanfreluche, and dipped her finger into each of the compartments, to assure herself that everything was right. This part of her duty was not disagreeable, and many of the scullions would have liked to perform it. But they might have lingered too long over the enchanting task. As for Mother Mitchel, she had been too well used to sweets to be excited now. She only wished to do her duty and to insure success.

All went on well. Mother Mitchel had given her approbation. Nothing was needed now but to crown the sublime and delicious edifice by placing upon it the crust — that is, the roof, or dome. This delicate operation was confided to the engineer-in-chief who now showed his superior genius. The dome, made beforehand of a single piece, was raised in the air by means of twelve balloons, whose force of ascension had been carefully calculated. First it was directed, by ropes, exactly over the top of the tart; then at the word of command it gently descended upon the right spot. It was not a quarter of an inch out of place. This was a great triumph for Mother Mitchel and her able assistant.

But all was not over. How should this colossal tart be cooked? That was the question that agitated all the people of the Greedy country, who came in crowds — lords and commons — to gaze at the wonderful spectacle.

Some of the envious or ill-tempered declared it would be impossible to cook the edifice which Mother Mitchel had built; and the doctors were, no one knows why, the saddest of all. Mother Mitchel, smiling at the general bewilderment, mounted the summit of the tart; she waved her crutch in the air, and while the cat miaowed in his sweetest voice, suddenly there issued from the woods a vast number of masons, drawing wagons of well-baked bricks, which they had prepared in secret. This sight silenced the ill-wishers and filled the hearts of the Greedy with hope.

In two days an enormous furnace was built around and above the colossal tart, which found itself shut up in an immense earthen pot. Thirty huge mouths, which were connected with thousands of winding pipes for conducting heat all over the building, were soon choked with fuel, by the help of two hundred charcoal burners, who, obeying a private signal, came forth in long array from the forest, each carrying his sack of coal. Behind them stood Mother Mitchel with a box

of matches, ready to fire each oven as it was filled. Of course the kindlings had not been forgotten, and was all soon in a blaze.

When the fire was lighted in the thirty ovens, when they saw the clouds of smoke rolling above the dome, that announced that the cooking had begun, the joy of the people was boundless. Poets improvised odes, and musicians sung verses without end, in honor of the superb prince who had been inspired to feed his people in so dainty a manner, when other rulers could not give them enough even of dry bread. The names of Mother Mitchel and of the illustrious engineer were not forgotten in this great glorification. Next to His Majesty, they were certainly the first of mankind, and their names were worthy of going down with his to the remotest posterity.

All the envious ones were thunderstruck. They tried to console themselves by saying that the work was not yet finished, and that an accident might happen at the last moment. But they did not really believe a word of this. Notwithstanding all their efforts to look cheerful, it had to be acknowledged that the cooking was possible. Their last resource was to declare the tart a bad one, but that would be biting off their own noses. As for declining to eat it, envy could never go so far as that in the country of the Greedy.

After two days, the unerring nose of Mother Mitchel discovered that the tart was cooked to perfection. The whole country was perfumed with its delicious aroma. Nothing more remained but to take down the furnaces. Mother Mitchel made her official announcement to His Majesty, who was delighted, and complimented her upon her punctuality. One day was still wanting to complete the month. During this time the people gave their eager help to the engineer in the demolition, wishing to have a hand in the great national work and to hasten the blessed moment. In the twinkling of an eye the thing was done. The bricks were taken down one by one, counted carefully, and carried into the forest again, to serve for another occasion.

The TART, unveiled, appeared at last in all its majesty and splendor. The dome was gilded, and reflected the rays of the sun in the most dazzling manner. The wildest excitement and rapture ran through the land of the Greedy. Each one sniffed with open nostrils the appetizing perfume. Their mouths watered, their eyes filled with tears, they embraced, pressed each other's hands, and indulged in touching pantomimes. Then the people of town and country, united by one rapturous feeling, joined hands and danced in a ring around the grand confection.

No one dared to touch the tart before the arrival of

His Majesty. Meanwhile, something must be done to allay the universal impatience, and they resolved to show Mother Mitchel the gratitude with which all hearts were filled. She was crowned with the laurel of *conquerors*, which is also the laurel of *sauce*, thus serving a double purpose. Then they placed her, with her crutch and her cat, upon a sort of throne, and carried her all round her vast work. Before her marched all the musicians of the town, dancing, drumming, fifing, and tooting upon all instruments, while behind her pressed an enthusiastic crowd, who rent the air with their plaudits and filled it with a shower of caps. Her fame was complete, and a noble pride shone on her countenance.

The royal procession arrived. A grand stairway had been built, so that the king and his ministers could mount to the summit of this monumental tart. Thence the King, amid a deep silence, thus addressed his people!

“My children,” said he, “you adore tarts. You despise all other food. If you could, you would even eat tarts in your sleep. Very well. Eat as much as you like. Here is one big enough to satisfy you. But know this, that while there remains a single crumb of this august tart, from the height of which I am proud to look down on you, all other food is forbidden you

on pain of death. While you are here, I have ordered all the pantries to be emptied, and all the butchers, bakers, pork and milk dealers, and fishmongers to shut up their shops. Why leave them open? Why indeed? Have you not here at discretion what you love best, and enough to last you ever, ever so long? Devote yourselves to it with all your hearts. I do not wish you to be bored with the sight of any other food."

"Greedy ones! behold your TART!"

What enthusiastic applause, what frantic hurrahs rent the air, in answer to this eloquent speech from the throne!

"Long live the King, Mother Mitchel and her cat! Long live the tart! Down with soup! Down with bread! To the bottom of the sea with all beefsteaks, mutton chops, and roasts!"

Such cries came from every lip. Old men gently stroked their chops, children patted their little stomachs, the crowd licked its thousand lips with eager joy. Even the babies danced in their nurses' arms, so precocious was the passion for tarts in this singular country. Grave professors, skipping like kids, declaimed Latin verses in honor of His Majesty and Mother Mitchel and the shyest young girls opened their mouths like the beaks of little birds. As for the doctors, they felt

a joy beyond expression. They had reflected. They understood. But — my friends! —

At last the signal was given. A detachment of the engineer corps arrived, armed with pick and cutlass, and marched in good order to the assault. A breach was soon opened, and the distribution began. The King smiled at the opening of the tart; though vast, it hardly showed more than a mouse hole in the monstrous wall.

The King stroked his beard grandly. "All goes well," said he, "for him who knows how to wait."

Who can tell how long the feast would have lasted if the King had not given his command that it should cease? Once more they expressed their gratitude with cries so stifled that they resembled grunts, and then rushed to the river. Never had a nation been so besmeared. Some were daubed to the eyes, others had their ears and hair all sticky. As for the little ones, they were marmalade from head to foot. When they had finished their toilets, the river ran all red and yellow and was sweetened for several hours, to the great surprise of all the fishes.

Before returning home, the people presented themselves before the King to receive his commands.

"Children!" said he, "the feast will begin again exactly at six o'clock. Give time to wash the dishes

and change the tablecloths, and you may once more give yourselves over to pleasure. You shall feast twice a day as long as the tart lasts. Do not forget. Yes! if there is not enough in this one, I will even order ANOTHER from Mother Mitchel; for you know the great woman is indefatigable. Your happiness is my only aim." (Marks of universal joy and emotion.) "You understand? Noon, and six o'clock! There is no need for me to say be punctual! Go, then, my children — be happy!"

The second feast was as gay as the first, and as long. A pleasant walk in the suburbs — first exercise — then a nap, had refreshed their appetites and unlimbered their jaws. But the King fancied that the breach made in the tart was a little smaller than that of the morning.

"'T is well!" said he, "'t is well! Wait till to-morrow, my friends; yes, till day after to-morrow, and *next week!*"

The next day the feast still went on gayly; yet at the evening meal the King noticed some empty seats.

"Why is this?" said he with pretended indifference, to the court physician.

"Your Majesty," said the great Olibriers, "a few weak stomachs; that is all."

On the next day there were larger empty spaces.

The enthusiasm visibly abated. The eighth day the crowd had diminished one half; the ninth, three quarters; the tenth day, of the thousand who came at first only two hundred remained; on the eleventh day only one hundred; and on the twelfth — alas! who would have thought it? — a single one answered to the call. Truly he was big enough. His body resembled a hogs-head, his mouth an oven, and his lips — we dare not say what. He was known in the town by the name of Patapouf. They dug out a fresh lump for him from the middle of the tart. It quickly vanished in his vast interior, and he retired with great dignity, proud to maintain the honor of his name and the glory of the Greedy Kingdom.

But the next day, even he, the very last, appeared no more. The unfortunate Patapouf had succumbed, and, like all the other inhabitants of the country, was in a very bad way. In short, it was soon known that the whole town had suffered agonies that night from too much tart. Let us draw a veil over those hours of torture. Mother Mitchel was in despair. Those ministers who had not guessed the secret dared not open their lips. All the city was one vast hospital. No one was seen in the streets but doctors and apothecaries' boys, running from house to house in frantic haste. It was dreadful! Doctor Olibriers was nearly knocked

out. As for the King, he held his tongue and shut himself up in his palace, but a secret joy shone in his eyes, to the wonder of every one. He waited three days without a word.

The third day, the King said to his ministers:

“Let us now go and see how my poor people are doing, and feel their pulse a little.”

The good King went to every house, without forgetting a single one. He visited small and great, rich and poor.

“Oh, oh! Your Majesty,” said all, “the tart was good, but may we never see it again! Plague on that tart! Better were dry bread. Your Majesty, for mercy’s sake, a little dry bread! Oh, a morsel of dry bread, how good it would be!”

“No indeed,” replied the King. “*There is more of that tart!*”

“What! Your Majesty, *must* we eat it all?”

“You *must!*” sternly replied the King, “you **MUST!** By the immortal beefsteaks! not one of you shall have a slice of bread, and not a loaf shall be baked in the kingdom while there remains a crumb of that excellent tart!”

“What misery!” thought these poor people. “That tart forever!”

The sufferers were in despair. There was only one

cry through all the town: "Ow! ow! ow!" For even the strongest and most courageous were in horrible agonies. They twisted, they writhed, they lay down, they got up. Always the inexorable colic. The dogs were not happier than their masters; even they had too much tart.

The spiteful tart looked in at all the windows. Built upon a height, it commanded the town. The mere sight of it made everybody ill, and its former admirers had nothing but curses for it now. Unhappily, nothing they could say or do made it any smaller; still formidable, it was a frightful joke for those miserable mortals. Most of them buried their heads in their pillows, drew their nightcaps over their eyes, and lay in bed all day to shut out the sight of it. But this would not do; they knew, they felt it was there. It was a nightmare, a horrible burden, a torturing anxiety.

In the midst of this terrible consternation the King remained inexorable during eight days. His heart bled for his people, but the lesson must sink deep if it were to bear fruit in future. When their pains were cured, little by little, through fasting alone, and his subjects pronounced these trembling words, "We are hungry!" the King sent them trays laden with — the inevitable tart.

“Ah!” cried they, with anguish, “the tart again! Always the tart, and nothing but the tart! Better were death!”

A few, who were almost famished, shut their eyes, and tried to eat a bit of the detested food; but it was all in vain — they could not swallow a mouthful.

At length came the happy day when the King, thinking their punishment had been severe enough and could never be forgotten, believed them at length cured of their greedinsss. That day he ordered Mother Mitchel to make in one of her colossal pots a super-excellent soup, of which a bowl was sent to every family. They received it with as much rapture as the Hebrews did the manna in the desert. They would gladly have had twice as much, but after their long fast it would not have been prudent. It was a proof that they had learned something already, that they understood this.

The next day, more soup. This time the King allowed slices of bread with it. How much this good soup comforted all the town! The next day there was a little more bread with it and a little soup meat. Then for a few days the kind Prince gave them roast beef and vegetables. The cure was complete.

The joy over this new diet was as great as ever had been felt for the tart. It promised to last longer. They were sure to sleep soundly, and to wake re-

freshed. It was pleasant to see in every house tables surrounded with happy, rosy faces, and laden with good nourishing food.

The Greedy people never fell back into their old ways. Their once puffed-out, sallow faces shone with health; they became, not fat, but muscular, ruddy, and solid. The butchers and bakers reopened their shops; the pastry cooks and confectioners shut theirs. The country of the Greedy was turned upside down, and if it kept its name, it was only from habit. As for the tart, it was not forgotten. To-day, in that marvelous country, there cannot be found a paper of sugar-plums or a basket of cakes. It is charming to see the red lips and beautiful teeth of the people. If they have still a king, he may well be proud to be their ruler.

Does this story teach that tarts and pies should never be eaten? No; but there is reason in all things.

The doctors alone did not profit by this great revolution. They could not afford to drink wine any longer in a land where indigestion had become unknown. The apothecaries were no less unhappy, spiders spun webs over their windows, and their horrible remedies were no longer of use.

Ask no more about Mother Mitchel. She was ridiculed without measure by those who had adored her.

To complete her misfortune, she lost her cat. Alas for Mother Mitchel!

The King received the reward of his wisdom. His grateful people called him neither Charles the Bold, nor Peter the Terrible, nor Louis the Great, but always by the noble name of Prosper I, the Reasonable.

VII

THE SELFISH GIANT

(A Story for Easter)

BY OSCAR WILDE

VII

THE SELFISH GIANT

EVERY afternoon, as they were coming from school, the children used to go and play in the Giant's garden.

It was a large lovely garden, with soft green grass. Here and there over the grass stood beautiful flowers like stars, and there were twelve peach-trees that in the springtime broke out into delicate blossoms of pink and pearl, and in the autumn bore rich fruit.

The birds sat on the trees and sang so sweetly that the children used to stop their games to listen to them. "How happy we are here!" they cried to each other.

One day the Giant came back. He had been to visit his friend the Cornish ogre, and had stayed with him for seven years. After the seven years were over he had said all that he had to say, for his conversation was limited, and he determined to return to his own castle. When he arrived he saw the children playing in the garden.

“What are you doing there?” he cried in a very gruff voice, and the children ran away.

“My own garden is my own garden,” said the Giant; “any one can understand that, and I will allow nobody to play in it but myself.” So he built a high wall all round it, and put up a notice-board:

TRESPASSERS

WILL BE

PROSECUTED

He was a very selfish giant.

The poor children had now nowhere to play. They tried to play on the road, but the road was very dusty and full of hard stones, and they did not like it. They used to wander round the high wall when their lessons were over, and talk about the beautiful garden inside. “How happy we were there,” they said to each other.

Then the Spring came, and all over the country there were little blossoms and little birds. Only in the garden of the Selfish Giant it was still winter. The birds did not care to sing in it, as there were no children, and the trees forgot to blossom. Once a beautiful flower put its head out from the grass, but when it saw the notice-board it was so sorry for the children that it slipped back into the ground again, and went off to sleep. The only people who were pleased were the Snow and the Frost. “Spring has forgotten

this garden," they cried, "so we will live here all the year round." The Snow covered up the grass with her great white cloak, and the Frost painted all the trees silver. Then they invited the North Wind to stay with them, and he came. He was wrapped in furs, and he roared all day about the garden, and blew the chimney-pots down. "This is a delightful spot," he said; "we must ask the Hail on a visit." So the Hail came. Every day for three hours he rattled on the roof of the castle till he broke most of the slates, and then he ran round and round the garden as fast as he could go. He was dressed in grey, and his breath was like ice.

"I cannot understand why the Spring is so late in coming," said the Selfish Giant, as he sat at the window and looked out at his cold white garden; "I hope there will be a change in the weather."

But the Spring never came, nor the Summer. The Autumn gave golden fruit to every garden, but to the Giant's garden she gave none. "He is too selfish," she said. So it was always Winter there, and the North Wind, and the Hail, and the Frost, and the Snow danced about through the trees.

One morning the Giant was lying awake in bed when he heard some lovely music. It sounded so sweet to his ears that he thought it must be the King's,

musicians passing by. It was really only a little linnet singing outside his window, but it was so long since he had heard a bird sing in his garden that it seemed to him to be the most beautiful music in the world. Then the Hail stopped dancing over his head, and the North Wind ceased roaring, and a delicious perfume came to him through the open casement. "I believe the Spring has come at last," said the Giant, and he jumped out of bed and looked out.

What did he see?

He saw a most wonderful sight. Through a little hole in the wall the children had crept in, and they were sitting in the branches of the trees. In every tree that he could see there was a little child. And the trees were so glad to have the children back again that they had covered themselves with blossoms, and were waving their arms gently above the children's heads. The birds were flying about and twittering with delight, and the flowers were looking up through the green grass and laughing. It was a lovely scene, only in one corner it was still winter. It was the farthest corner of the garden, and in it was standing a little boy. He was so small that he could not reach up to the branches of the tree, and he was wandering all round it, crying bitterly. The poor tree was still quite covered with frost and snow, and the North Wind was

blowing and roaring above it. "Climb up! little boy," said the Tree, and it bent its branches down as low as it could; but the boy was too tiny.

And the Giant's heart melted as he looked out. "How selfish I have been!" he said; "now I know why the Spring would not come here. I will put that poor little boy on the top of the tree, and then I will knock down the wall, and my garden shall be the children's play-ground for ever and ever." He was really very sorry for what he had done.

So he crept down-stairs and opened the front door quite softly, and went out into the garden. But when the children saw him they were so frightened that they all ran away, and the garden became winter again. Only the little boy did not run, for his eyes were so full of tears that he did not see the Giant coming. And the Giant strode up behind him and took him gently in his hand, and put him up into the tree. And the tree broke at once into blossom, and the birds came and sang on it, and the little boy stretched out his two arms and flung them round the Giant's neck, and kissed him. And the other children, when they saw that the Giant was not wicked any longer, came running back, and with them came the Spring. "It is your garden now, little children," said the Giant, and he took a great axe and knocked down the wall. And

when the people were going to market at twelve o'clock they found the Giant playing with the children in the most beautiful garden they had ever seen.

All day long they played, and in the evening they came to the Giant to bid him good-bye.

"But where is your little companion?" he said, "the boy I put into the tree." The Giant loved him the best because he had kissed him.

"We don't know," answered the children, "he has gone away."

"You must tell him to be sure and come here to-morrow," said the Giant. But the children said they did not know where he lived, and had never seen him before; and the Giant felt very sad.

Every afternoon when school was over, the children came and played with the Giant. But the little boy whom the Giant loved was never seen again. The Giant was very kind to all the children, yet he longed for his first little friend, and often spoke of him. "How I would like to see him!" he used to say.

Years went over, and the Giant grew very old and feeble. He could not play about any more, so he sat in a huge arm-chair, and watched the children at their games, and admired his garden. "I have many beautiful flowers," he said; "but the children are the most beautiful flowers of all."

One winter morning he looked out of his window as he was dressing. He did not hate the Winter now, for he knew that it was merely Spring asleep, and that the flowers were resting.

Suddenly he rubbed his eyes in wonder, and looked and looked. It certainly was a marvellous sight. In the farthest corner of the garden was a tree quite covered with lovely white blossoms. Its branches were all golden, and silver fruit hung down from them, and underneath it stood the little boy he had loved.

Down-stairs ran the Giant in great joy, and out into the garden. He hastened across, and came near to the child. And when he came quite close his face grew red with anger, and he said, "Who hath dared to wound thee?" For on the palms of the child's hands were the prints of two nails, and the prints of two nails on the little feet.

"Who hath dared to wound thee?" cried the Giant; "tell me, that I may take my big sword and slay him."

"Nay!" answered the child; "but these are the wounds of Love."

"Who art thou?" said the Giant, and a strange awe fell on him, and he knelt before the little child.

And the child smiled on the Giant, and said to him, "You let me play once in your garden; to-day you shall come with me to my garden, which is Paradise."

And when the children ran in that afternoon, they found the Giant lying dead under the tree, all covered with white blossoms.

VIII

THE GUNNIWOLF

ADAPTED FROM A SOUTHERN NONSENSE TALE

VIII

THE GUNNIWOLF

THERE was once a little girl who lived with her mother very close to a dense jungle. Each day the mother would caution Little Girl to be most careful and never enter the jungle, because — if she did — the Gunniwolf might get her! Little Girl always promised that she would never, *never* even go *near* the jungle.

One day the mother had to go away for a while. Her last words were to caution Little Girl that whatever else she did she must keep far away from the jungle! And Little Girl was very sure that she would not go anywhere *near* it.

The mother was hardly out of sight, however, when Little Girl noticed some beautiful white flowers growing at the very edge of the jungle. “Oh,” she thought, “would n’t I love to have some of those — I’ll pick just a few.” Then, forgetting all about the warning, she began to gather the white flowers, all the while singing happily to herself, “Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa.”¹

¹ These words are sung and motion of flower-picking imitated.

All of a sudden she noticed, a little further in the jungle, some *beautiful* yellow flowers growing. "Oh," she thought, "I must surely gather some of those too!" On she tripped, farther into the jungle, and began picking the yellow flowers, all the while singing happily, "Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa."

When she had her arms full of white and yellow flowers, she peeped a little further, and way in the middle of the jungle she saw some *beautiful* purple flowers growing. "Oh," she thought, "I'll take just a few of those, and what a pretty bouquet I'll have to show my mother!" So she gathered the purple flowers too, singing to herself all the while, "Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa,"—when SUDDENLY—up rose the Gunniwolf! He said, "Little Girl, why for you move?"

Tremblingly she answered, "I no move."

The Gunniwolf said, "Then you sing that guten sweeten song again!" So she sang, "Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa," and then—the old Gunniwolf nodded his head and fell fast asleep.

AWAY ran Little Girl as fast as ever she could,—pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat.¹

¹ Indicate with motion of two fingers of one hand, fast running of Little Girl.

Then the Gunniwolf woke up! AWAY he ran,— hunker-cha, hunker-cha, hunker-cha, hunker-cha,¹ until he caught up to her; and he said, “Little Girl, why for you move?”

“I no move,” she answered.

“Then you sing that guten, sweeten song again!”

Timidly she sang, “Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa”; then the old Gunniwolf nodded, nodded, and went sound asleep.

AWAY ran Little Girl just as fast as ever she could,— pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat; and again the Gunniwolf woke up! Away he ran — hunker-cha, hunker-cha, hunker-cha, hunker-cha; pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat; hunker-cha, hunker-cha, until he caught up to her and said, “Little Girl, why for you move?”

“I no move.”

“Then you sing that guten, sweeten song again!”

So she sang, “Kum-kwa, khi-wa, kum-kwa, khi-wa,” until the old Gunniwolf again nodded, nodded and fell asleep.

Then AWAY ran Little Girl — pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat — until she came almost to the edge of the jungle!

¹ Indicate with motion of two hands, fast leaps of Gunniwolf.

Pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat,¹ until she got away out of the jungle!

Pit-pat, pit-pat, pitty-pat, pit-ty-pat,² until she reached her very own door.

From that day to this, Little Girl has *never, never* gone into the jungle.

¹ Indicate running steps more slowly.

² Indicate running steps still more slowly.

IX

THE FATE OF ECHO
ADAPTED FROM A GREEK MYTH

IX

THE FATE OF ECHO

IN the flowery groves of Helicon there was once a fair nymph called Echo, who, hand in hand with her sisters, played in the green meadows and beside the mountain streams. Among them all her feet were the lightest, and her laugh the merriest, and in the telling of stories not one was so clever as she.

Hera, who presided over the nymphs, was not willing that they should spend all their time in play. So if any of them were plotting mischief, they would say, "Echo, go and sit beside Hera in her bower and tell her a story so wonderful that she will not come out and find us. Make it a long one, Echo, and we will twine you a garland to wear in your hair."

Echo, with a gay laugh, would trip away and cast herself on the grass at Hera's feet. When Hera saw Echo she would smile upon her and ask, "What have you come for now, little sprite?"

"I had a longing to talk with you, Hera," she would answer, "and I have a wonderful new story to tell you,

All the others are as nothing compared to the one I shall tell you now."

"Begin, then," said Hera, "and if it pleases me, I will listen to the end."

So Echo would sit on the grass at Hera's feet and tell her story. She had a rare gift of words and had seen and heard many strange things of which she alone could tell. Hera would forget her watchfulness, and listen entranced at the magic of Echo's words. Meanwhile the nymphs would play to their hearts' content and have no fear of her anger.

But at last Hera found out the prank which Echo was playing upon her, and her wrath flashed forth like lightning.

"The gift of telling stories with which you have tricked me shall be yours no more!" she cried. "Hereafter you will not be able to speak unless someone else has spoken, and then, even if you wish, you shall not remain silent, but must repeat once more the last words which you have heard."

"Alas! alas!" cried all the nymphs.

"Alas! alas!" cried Echo after them, and could say no more, though she longed to speak and beg Hera to forgive her.

Now, it chanced one day that the youth, Narcissus, strayed away from his companions who were out hunt-

ing, and lost his way upon the lonely heights of Helicon. He was as fair as a flower in spring and all who saw him straightway loved him. Although his face was as smooth and soft as a maiden's, his heart was hard as steel. He spurned those who cared for him, for he loved no one but himself.

When the nymphs saw Narcissus wandering alone through the woods, they too, loved him for his beauty, and they followed him wherever he went. Because he was mortal, they were shy of him, and would not show themselves, but hid behind the trees and rocks so that he should not see them. Among the others Echo followed him, too. At last, when Narcissus found that he was really lost, he began to shout for his companions.

“Ho, there! where are you?” he cried.

“Where are you?” answered Echo.

When Narcissus heard the voice, he stopped and listened, but all was silent. Again he called,

“I am here in the wood — Narcissus.”

“In the wood — Narcissus,” said she.

“Come hither,” he cried.

“Come hither,” repeated Echo.

Wondering at the strange voice which answered him, Narcissus looked around, but he saw no one.

“Are you close at hand?” he asked.

“Close at hand,” she answered.

Still wondering at seeing no one, Narcissus followed in the direction of her voice. When Echo found that he was coming toward her, she ran farther away, so that when next he called, her voice sounded more distant. Wherever she went, he still followed her and she saw that she could not escape; wherever she hid, if he called she had to answer, thus revealing her hiding place.

At length they came to an open space in the trees, where a green bank sloped down to a clear pool in the hollow. Here, by the water, Echo stood and as Narcissus came out from the trees she wrung her hands and the tears dropped from her eyes for she wanted to speak to him, but she could not say a word. When Narcissus saw her he stopped.

“Are you she who calls me?” he asked.

“Who calls me?” she answered.

“I have told you,—Narcissus,” he said.

“Narcissus,” she cried, and held out her hands to him.

“Who are you?” he asked.

“Who are you?” she repeated.

“Have I not told you?” he said impatiently, “Narcissus.”

“Narcissus,” she said again and still held out her hands beseechingly.

“Tell me,” he cried, “who are you and why do you call me?”

“Why do you call me?” said she.

At this Narcissus grew angry.

“Whoever you are,” he said, “you have led me a pretty chase through these woods and now you do nothing but mock me.”

“You do nothing but mock me,” said she.

Then Narcissus grew still more angry and tired out with his wanderings, he threw himself on the grass beside the pool and would not look at her nor speak to her again. For a time Echo stood beside him weeping and longing to explain, but not a word could she utter. At last she left him and went and hid behind a rock close by.

After a while Narcissus remembered that he was thirsty and he bent over the edge of the pool to drink. As he held out his hand to take the water, he saw looking up at him, a face which was the fairest he had ever looked upon. He did not know that it was his own reflection, which he was seeing for the first time. It was so beautiful that, at last, Narcissus’ heart was kindled with love, which he never before had felt for

any one beside himself. With a sigh he held out two arms towards the figure, which also held out two arms to him; and Echo from the rock answered back his sigh. He bent down closer to the water and whispered, "How lovely you are!"

"How lovely you are," answered Echo from the rock.

At these words, Narcissus bent down further in an effort to reach the figure but it vanished away. So he drew back and waited awhile, thinking he had been over hasty. After a while when the ripples on the water died away, the face appeared again as plainly as before.

Once again Narcissus bent toward it, and once again it fled from his touch. Time after time he tried, but the result was always the same.

At length Narcissus gave up in despair. He sat looking down into the water with the tear drops falling from his eyes; and the figure in the pool wept too. The longer he looked, the more he loved the beautiful face. In a last effort to reach it he leaned forward and threw himself into the pool.

Echo, peeping from the rock, saw all that had happened, and when Narcissus cast himself into the pool, she rushed forward to save him. When she found that she was too late, she threw herself on the grass

beside the pool and wept and wept until she grew as thin as a shadow with weeping, and nothing but her voice remained.

To this day Echo lives, haunting rocks and caves and halls. No one has seen her since the day, long ago, when she tried to save Narcissus from the pool. But the voice of Echo we all have heard repeating our words when we thought no one near. And yet, she will never be able to express her longing.

“Narcissus, Narcissus, come back — come back to me!”

By the side of the clear pool, in the grass that Echo had watered with her tears, there grew a sweet scented flower, with a pure white face and a crown of gold. It is the “Narcissus,” the spirit of the youth, who, for love of his own sweet face, went down in the waters of Helicon.

X

TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH
RUSSIAN FAIRY TALE

X

TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH ¹

LONG, long ago there lived a King who was such a mighty monarch that whenever he sneezed everyone in the whole country had to say, "To your good health!" Everyone said it except the Shepherd with the staring eyes, and he would not say it.

The King heard of this and was very angry, and sent for the Shepherd to appear before him.

The Shepherd came and stood before the throne, where the King sat looking very grand and powerful. But however grand or powerful he might be, the Shepherd did not feel a bit afraid of him.

"Say at once 'To my good health!'" cried the King.

"To my good health," replied the Shepherd.

"To mine — to *mine*, you rascal, you vagabond!" stormed the King.

"To mine, to mine, Your Majesty," was the answer.

"But to *mine* — to my own!" roared the King, and beat on his breast in a rage.

¹ Reprinted from "The Crimson Fairy Book," copyright by Longmans, Green and Company.

“Well, yes; to mine, of course, to my own,” cried the Shepherd, and gently tapped his breast.

The King was beside himself with fury and did not know what to do, when the Lord Chamberlain interfered:

“Say at once—say this very moment, ‘To your health, Your Majesty,’ for if you don’t say it you will lose your life,” he whispered.

“No, I won’t say it till I get the Princess for my wife,” was the Shepherd’s answer.

Now the Princess was sitting on a little throne beside the King, her father, and she looked as sweet and lovely as a little golden dove. When she heard what the Shepherd said, she could not help laughing, for there is no denying the fact that this young shepherd with the staring eyes pleased her very much; indeed, he pleased her better than any king’s son she had yet seen.

But the King was not as pleasant as his daughter, and he gave orders to throw the Shepherd into the white bear’s pit.

The guards led him away and thrust him into the pit with the white bear, who had had nothing to eat for two days and was very hungry. The door of the pit was hardly closed when the bear rushed at the Shepherd; but when it saw his eyes it was so fright-

ened that it was ready to eat itself. It shrank away into a corner and gazed at him from there, and in spite of being so famished, did not dare to touch him, but sucked its own paws from sheer hunger. The Shepherd felt that if he once removed his eyes off the beast he was a dead man, and in order to keep himself awake he made songs and sang them, and so the night went by.

Next morning the Lord Chamberlain came to see the Shepherd's bones, and was amazed to find him alive and well. He led him to the King, who fell into a furious passion, and said:

"Well, you have learned what it is to be very near death, and now will you say, 'To my very good health'?"

But the Shepherd answered:

"I am not afraid of ten deaths! I will only say it if I may have the Princess for my wife."

"Then go to your death," cried the King and ordered him to be thrown into the den with the wild boars.

The wild boars had not been fed for a week, and when the Shepherd was thrust into their den they rushed at him to tear him to pieces. But the Shepherd took a little flute out of the sleeve of his jacket, and began to play a merry tune, on which the wild boars

first of all shrank shyly away, and then got up on their hind legs and danced gaily. The Shepherd would have given anything to be able to laugh, they looked so funny; but he dared not stop playing, for he knew well enough that the moment he stopped they would fall upon him and tear him to pieces. His eyes were of no use to him here, for he could not have stared ten wild boars in the face at once; so he kept on playing, and the wild boars danced very slowly, as if in a minuet; then by degrees he played faster and faster, till they could hardly twist and turn quickly enough, and ended by falling over each other in a heap, quite exhausted and out of breath.

Then the Shepherd ventured to laugh at last; and he laughed so long and so loud that when the Lord Chamberlain came early in the morning, expecting to find only his bones, the tears were still running down his cheeks from laughter.

As soon as the King was dressed the Shepherd was again brought before him; but he was more angry than ever to think the wild boars had not torn the man to bits, and he said:

“ Well, you have learned what it feels to be near ten deaths, *now* say ‘ To my good health ’ ! ”

But the Shepherd broke in with:

“I do not fear a hundred deaths; and I will only say it if I may have the Princess for my wife.”

“Then go to a hundred deaths!” roared the King, and ordered the Shepherd to be thrown down the deep vault of scythes.

The guards dragged him away to a dark dungeon, in the middle of which was a deep well with sharp scythes all round it. At the bottom of the well was a little light by which one could see, if anyone was thrown in, whether he had fallen to the bottom.

When the Shepherd was dragged to the dungeon he begged the guards to leave him alone a little while that he might look down into the pit of scythes; perhaps he might after all make up his mind to say, “To your good health,” to the King.

So the guards left him alone, and he stuck up his long stick near the wall, hung his cloak round the stick and put his hat on the top. He also hung his knapsack up beside the cloak, so that it might seem to have somebody within it. When this was done, he called out to the guards and said that he had considered the matter, but after all he could not make up his mind to say what the King wished.

The guards came in, threw the hat and cloak, knapsack and stick all down in the well together, watched

to see how they put out the light at the bottom, and came away, thinking that now there was really an end of the Shepherd. But he had hidden in a dark corner, and was now laughing to himself all the time.

Quite early next morning came the Lord Chamberlain with a lamp, and he nearly fell backwards with surprise when he saw the Shepherd alive and well. He brought him to the King, whose fury was greater than ever, but who cried :

“ Well, now you have been near a hundred deaths ; will you say, ‘ To your good health ’ ? ”

But the Shepherd only gave the same answer :

“ I won’t say it till the Princess is my wife.”

“ Perhaps, after all, you may do it for less,” said the King, who saw that there was no chance of making away with the Shepherd ; and he ordered the state coach to be got ready ; then he made the Shepherd get in with him and sit beside him, and ordered the coachman to drive to the silver wood.

When they reached it, he said :

“ Do you see this silver wood ? Well, if you will say ‘ To your good health,’ I will give it to you.”

The Shepherd turned hot and cold by turns, but he still persisted :

“ I will not say it till the Princess is my wife.”

The King was much vexed ; he drove further on

till they came to a splendid castle, all of gold, and then he said :

“ Do you see this golden castle? Well, I will give you that too, the silver wood and the golden castle, if only you will say that one thing to me: ‘ To your good health.’ ”

The Shepherd gaped and wondered, and was quite dazzled but he still said :

“ No, I will not say it till I have the Princess for my wife.”

This time the King was overwhelmed with grief, and gave orders to drive on to the diamond pond, and there he tried once more :

“ Do you see this diamond pond? I will give you that too, the silver wood and the golden castle and the diamond pond. You shall have them all — all, if you will but say ‘ To your good health.’ ”

The Shepherd had to shut his staring eyes tight not to be dazzled with the brilliant pond, but still he said :

“ No, no; I will not say it till I have the Princess for my wife.”

Then the King saw that all his efforts were useless, and that he might as well give in; so he said :

“ Well, well, it is all the same to me — I will give you my daughter to wife; but then you really and truly must say to me, ‘ To your good health.’ ”

“Of course I’ll say it; why should I not say it? It stands to reason that I shall say it then.”

At this the King was more delighted than anyone could have believed. He made it known all through the country that there were going to be great rejoicings, as the Princess was going to be married. And everyone rejoiced to think that the Princess, who had refused so many royal suitors, should have ended by falling in love with the staring-eyed Shepherd.

There was such a wedding as had never been seen. Everyone ate and drank and danced. Even the sick were feasted, and quite tiny new-born children had presents given them. But the greatest merrymaking was in the King’s palace; there the best bands played and the best food was cooked. A crowd of people sat down to table, and all was fun and merrymaking.

And when the groomsman, according to custom, brought in the great boar’s head on a big dish and placed it before the King, so that he might carve it and give everyone a share, the savoury smell was so strong that the King began to sneeze with all his might.

“To your very good health!” cried the Shepherd before anyone else, and the King was so delighted that he did not regret having given him his daughter.

In time, when the old King died, the Shepherd succeeded him. He made a very good king, and never

expected his people to wish him well against their wills: but, all the same, everyone did wish him well, because they loved him.

XI

THE LITTLE RABBIT WHO WANTED RED
WINGS

(Southern Folk Tale)

BY CAROLYN BAILEY

XI

THE LITTLE RABBIT WHO WANTED RED WINGS ¹

ONCE upon a time there was a little White Rabbit with two beautiful long pink ears and two bright red eyes and four soft little feet — *such* a pretty little White Rabbit, but he was n't happy.

Just think, this little White Rabbit wanted to be somebody else instead of the nice little rabbit that he was.

When Mr. Bushy Tail, the gray squirrel, went by, the little White Rabbit would say to his Mammy:

"Oh, Mammy, I *wish* I had a long gray tail like Mr. Bushy Tail's."

And when Mr. Porcupine went by, the little White Rabbit would say to his Mammy:

"Oh, Mammy, I *wish* I had a back full of bristles like Mr. Porcupine's."

And when Miss Puddle-Duck went by in her two little red rubbers, the little White Rabbit would say:

¹ From "For the Story Teller," by Carolyn S. Bailey, used by permission of the publishers, Milton Bradley Company.

“ Oh, Mammy, I *wish* I had a pair of red rubbers like Miss Puddle-Duck’s.”

So he went on and on wishing until his Mammy was clean tired out with his wishing and Old Mr. Ground Hog heard him one day.

Old Mr. Ground Hog is very wise indeed, so he said to the little White Rabbit :

“ Why don’t you go down to the Wishing Pond, and if you look in the water at yourself and turn around three times in a circle, you will get your wish.”

So the little White Rabbit trotted off, all alone by himself through the woods until he came to a little pool of green water lying in a low tree stump, and that was the Wishing Pond. There was a little, *little* bird, all red, sitting on the edge of the Wishing Pond to get a drink, and as soon as the little White Rabbit saw him he began to wish again :

“ Oh, I wish I had a pair of little red wings!” he said. Just then he looked in the Wishing Pond and he saw his little white face. Then he turned around three times and something happened. He began to have a queer feeling in his shoulders, like he felt in his mouth when he was cutting his teeth. It was his wings coming through. So he sat all day in the woods by the Wishing Pond waiting for them to grow, and, by and by, when it was almost sundown, he started

home to see his Mammy and show her, because he had a beautiful pair of long, trailing red wings.

But by the time he reached home it was getting dark, and when he went into the hole at the foot of a big tree where he lived, his Mammy did n't know him. No, she really and truly did not know him, because, you see, she had never seen a rabbit with red wings in all her life. And so the little White Rabbit had to go out again, because his Mammy would n't let him get into his own bed. He had to go out and look for some place to sleep all night.

He went and went until he came to Mr. Bushy Tail's house, and he rapped on the door and said:

"Please, kind Mr. Bushy Tail, may I sleep in your house all night?"

But Mr. Bushy Tail opened his door a crack and then he slammed it tight shut again. You see he had never seen a rabbit with red wings in all his life.

So the little White Rabbit went and went until he came to Miss Puddle-Duck's nest down by the marsh and he said:

"Please, kind Miss Puddle-Duck, may I sleep in your nest all night?"

But Miss Puddle-Duck poked her head up out of her nest just a little way and then she shut her eyes and

stretched her wings out so far that she covered her whole nest.

You see she had never seen a rabbit with red wings in all her life.

So the little White Rabbit went and went until he came to Old Mr. Ground Hog's hole and Old Mr. Ground Hog let him sleep with him all night, but the hole had beech-nuts spread all over it. Old Mr. Ground Hog liked to sleep on them, but they hurt the little White Rabbit's feet and made him very uncomfortable before morning.

When it came morning, the little White Rabbit decided to try his wings and fly a little, so he climbed up on a hill and spread his wings and sailed off, but he landed in a low bush all full of prickles, and his four feet got mixed up with the twigs so he could not get down.

"Mammy, Mammy, Mammy, come and help me!" he called.

His Mammy did n't hear him, but Old Mr. Ground Hog did, and he came and helped the little White Rabbit out of the prickly bush.

"Don't you want your red wings?" Mr. Ground Hog asked.

"No, no!" said the little White Rabbit.

"Well," said Old Ground Hog, "why don't you go

down to the Wishing Pond and wish them *off* again?"

So the little White Rabbit went down to the Wishing Pond and he saw his face in it. Then he turned around three times, and, sure enough, his red wings were gone. Then he went home to his Mammy, who knew him right away and was so glad to see him that he never, *never* wished to be something different from what he really was again.

XII

THE LEGEND OF THE CHRISTMAS ROSE

(A Christmas Story)

BY SELMA LAGERLÖF

XII

THE LEGEND OF THE CHRISTMAS ROSE

ROBBER MOTHER, who lived in Robbers' Cave up in Göinge forest, went down to the village one day on a begging tour. Robber Father, who was an outlawed man, did not dare to leave the forest, but had to content himself with lying in wait for the wayfarers who ventured within its borders. But at that time travellers were not very plentiful in Southern Skane. If it so happened that the man had had a few weeks of ill luck with his hunt, his wife would take to the road. She took with her five youngsters, and each youngster wore a ragged leathern suit and birch-bark shoes and bore a sack on his back as long as himself. When Robber Mother stepped inside the door of a cabin, no one dared refuse to give her whatever she demanded; for she was not above coming back the following night and setting fire to the house if she had not been well received. Robber Mother and her brood were worse than a pack of wolves, and many a man felt like running a spear through them; but it was never done, because they all knew that the man stayed

up in the forest, and he would have known how to wreak vengeance if anything had happened to the children or the old woman.

Now that Robber Mother went from house to house and begged, she came one day to Övid, which at that time was a cloister. She rang the bell of the cloister gate and asked for food. The watchman let down a small wicket in the gate and handed her six round bread cakes — one for herself and one for each of the five children.

While the mother was standing quietly at the gate, her youngsters were running about. And now one of them came and pulled at her skirt, as a signal that he had discovered something which she ought to come and see, and Robber Mother followed him promptly.

The entire cloister was surrounded by a high and strong wall, but the youngster had managed to find a little back gate which stood ajar. When Robber Mother got there, she pushed the gate open and walked inside without asking leave, as it was her custom to do.

Övid Cloister was managed at that time by Abbot Hans, who knew all about herbs. Just within the cloister wall he had planted a little herb garden, and it was into this that the old woman had forced her way.

At first glance Robber Mother was so astonished

that she paused at the gate. It was high summertime, and Abbot Hans' garden was so full of flowers that the eyes were fairly dazzled by the blues, reds, and yellows, as one looked into it. But presently an indulgent smile spread over her features, and she started to walk up a narrow path that lay between many flower-beds.

In the garden a lay brother walked about pulling up weeds. It was he who had left the door in the wall open, that he might throw the weeds and tares on the rubbish heap outside.

When he saw Robber Mother coming in, with all five youngsters in tow, he ran toward her at once and ordered them away. But the beggar woman walked right on as before. She cast her eyes up and down, looking now at the stiff white lilies which spread near the ground, then on the ivy climbing high upon the cloister wall, and took no notice whatever of the lay brother.

He thought she had not understood him, and wanted to take her by the arm and turn her toward the gate. But when the robber woman saw his purpose, she gave him a look that sent him reeling backward. She had been walking with back bent under her beggar's pack, but now she straightened herself to her full height. "I am Robber Mother from Göinge forest; so touch

me if you dare!" And it was obvious that she was as certain she would be left in peace as if she had announced that she was the Queen of Denmark.

And yet the lay brother dared to oppose her, although now, when he knew who she was, he spoke reasonably to her. "You must know, Robber Mother, that this is a monks' cloister, and no woman in the land is allowed within these walls. If you do not go away, the monks will be angry with me because I forgot to close the gate, and perhaps they will drive me away from the cloister and the herb garden."

But such prayers were wasted on Robber Mother. She walked straight ahead among the little flower-beds and looked at the hyssop with its magenta blossoms, and at the honeysuckles, which were full of deep orange-colored flower clusters.

Then the lay brother knew of no other remedy than to run into the cloister and call for help.

He returned with two stalwart monks, and Robber Mother saw that now it meant business! With feet firmly planted she stood in the path and began shrieking in strident tones all the awful vengeance she would wreak on the cloister if she could n't remain in the herb garden as long as she wished. But the monks did not see why they need fear her and thought only of driving her out. Then Robber Mother let out a per-

fect volley of shrieks, and, throwing herself upon the monks, clawed and bit at them; so did all the youngsters. The men soon learned that she could overpower them, and all they could do was to go back into the cloister for reinforcements.

As they ran through the passage-way which led to the cloister, they met Abbot Hans, who came rushing out to learn what all this noise was about.

Then they had to confess that Robber Mother from Göinge forest had come into the cloister and that they were unable to drive her out and must call for assistance.

But Abbot Hans upbraided them for using force and forbade their calling for help. He sent both monks back to their work, and although he was an old and fragile man, he took with him only the lay brother.

When Abbot Hans came out into the garden, Robber Mother was still wandering among the flower-beds. He regarded her with astonishment. He was certain that Robber Mother had never before seen an herb garden; yet she sauntered leisurely between all the small patches, each of which had been planted with its own species of rare flower, and looked at them as if they were old acquaintances. At some she smiled, at others she shook her head.

Abbot Hans loved his herb garden as much as it was

possible for him to love anything earthly and perishable. Wild and terrible as the old woman looked, he could n't help liking that she had fought with three monks for the privilege of viewing the garden in peace. He came up to her and asked in a mild tone if the garden pleased her.

Robber Mother turned defiantly toward Abbot Hans, for she expected only to be trapped and overpowered. But when she noticed his white hair and bent form, she answered peaceably, "First, when I saw this, I thought I had never seen a prettier garden; but now I see that it can't be compared with one I know of."

Abbot Hans had certainly expected a different answer. When he heard that Robber Mother had seen a garden more beautiful than his, a faint flush spread over his withered cheek. The lay brother, who was standing close by, immediately began to censure the old woman. "This is Abbot Hans," said he, "who with much care and diligence has gathered the flowers from far and near for his herb garden. We all know that there is not a more beautiful garden to be found in all Skane, and it is not befitting that you, who live in the wild forest all the year around, should find fault with his work."

"I don't wish to make myself the judge of either him or you," said Robber Mother. "I'm only say-

ing that if you could see the garden of which I am thinking you would uproot all the flowers planted here and cast them away like weeds."

But the Abbot's assistant was hardly less proud of the flowers than the Abbot himself, and after hearing her remarks he laughed derisively. "I can understand that you only talk like this to tease us. It must be a pretty garden that you have made for yourself amongst the pines in Göinge forest! I'd be willing to wager my soul's salvation that you have never before been within the walls of an herb garden."

Robber Mother grew crimson with rage to think that her word was doubted, and she cried out: "It may be true that until today I had never been within the walls of an herb garden; but you monks, who are holy men, certainly must know that on every Christmas Eve the great Göinge forest is transformed into a beautiful garden, to commemorate the hour of our Lord's birth. We who live in the forest have seen this happen every year. And in that garden I have seen flowers so lovely that I dared not lift my hand to pluck them."

The lay brother wanted to continue the argument, but Abbot Hans gave him a sign to be silent. For, ever since his childhood, Abbot Hans had heard it said that on every Christmas Eve the forest was dressed in holiday glory. He had often longed to see it, but

he had never had the good fortune. Eagerly he begged and implored Robber Mother that he might come up to the Robbers' Cave on Christmas Eve. If she would only send one of her children to show him the way, he could ride up there alone, and he would never betray them — on the contrary, he would reward them, in so far as it lay in his power.

Robber Mother said no at first, for she was thinking of Robber Father and of the peril which might befall him should she permit Abbot Hans to ride up to their cave. At the same time the desire to prove to the monk that the garden which she knew was more beautiful than his got the better of her, and she gave in.

“But more than one follower you cannot take with you,” said she, “and you are not to waylay us or trap us, as sure as you are a holy man.”

This Abbot Hans promised, and then Robber Mother went her way. Abbot Hans commanded the lay brother not to reveal to a soul that which had been agreed upon. He feared that the monks, should they learn of his purpose, would not allow a man of his years to go up to the Robbers' Cave.

Nor did he himself intend to reveal his project to a human being. And then it happened that Archbishop Absalon from Lund came to Övid and remained through the night. When Abbot Hans was

showing him the herb garden, he got to thinking of Robber Mother's visit, and the lay brother, who was at work in the garden, heard Abbot Hans telling the Bishop about Robber Father, who these many years had lived as an outlaw in the forest, and asking him for a letter of ransom for the man, that he might lead an honest life among respectable folk. "As things are now," said Abbot Hans, "his children are growing up into worse malefactors than himself, and you will soon have a whole gang of robbers to deal with up there in the forest."

But the Archbishop replied that he did not care to let the robber loose among honest folk in the villages. It would be best for all that he remain in the forest. Then Abbot Hans grew zealous and told the Bishop all about Göinge forest, which, every year at Yuletide, clothed itself in summer bloom around the Robbers' Cave. "If these bandits are not so bad but that God's glories can be made manifest to them, surely we cannot be too wicked to experience the same blessing."

The Archbishop knew how to answer Abbot Hans. "This much I will promise you, Abbot Hans," he said, smiling, "that any day you send me a blossom from the garden in Göinge forest, I will give you letters of ransom for all the outlaws you may choose to plead for."

The lay brother apprehended that Bishop Absalon believed as little in this story of Robber Mother's as he himself; but Abbot Hans perceived nothing of the sort, but thanked Absalon for his good promise and said he would surely send him the flower.

Abbot Hans had his way. And the following Christmas Eve he did not sit at home with his monks in Övid Cloister, but was on his way to Göinge forest. One of Robber Mother's wild youngsters ran ahead of him, and close behind him was the lay brother who had talked with Robber Mother in the herb garden.

Abbot Hans had been longing to make this journey, and he was very happy now that it had come to pass. But it was a different matter with the lay brother who accompanied him. Abbot Hans was very dear to him, and he would not willingly have allowed another to attend him and watch over him; but he did n't believe that he should see any Christmas Eve garden. He thought the whole thing a snare which Robber Mother had, with great cunning, laid for Abbot Hans, that he might fall into her husband's clutches.

While Abbot Hans was riding toward the forest, he saw that everywhere they were preparing to celebrate Christmas. In every peasant settlement fires were

lighted in the bathhouse to warm it for the afternoon bathing. Great hunks of meat and bread were being carried from the larders into the cabins, and from the barns came the men with big sheaves of straw to be strewn over the floors.

As he rode by the little country churches, he observed that each parson, with his sexton, was busily engaged in decorating his church; and when he came to the road which leads to Bösjo Cloister, he observed that all the poor of the parish were coming with armfuls of bread and long candles, which they had received at the cloister gate.

When Abbot Hans saw all these Christmas preparations, his haste increased. He was thinking of the festivities that awaited him, which were greater than any the others would be privileged to enjoy.

But the lay brother whined and fretted when he saw how they were preparing to celebrate Christmas in every humble cottage. He grew more and more anxious, and begged and implored Abbot Hans to turn back and not to throw himself deliberately into the robbers' hands.

Abbot Hans went straight ahead, paying no heed to his lamentations. He left the plain behind him and came up into desolate and wild forest regions. Here the road was bad, almost like a stony and burr-strewn

path, with neither bridge nor plank to help them over brooklet and rivulet. The farther they rode, the colder it grew, and after a while they came upon snow-covered ground.

It turned out to be a long and hazardous ride through the forest. They climbed steep and slippery side paths, crawled over swamp and marsh, and pushed through windfall and bramble. Just as daylight was waning, the robber boy guided them across a forest meadow, skirted by tall, naked leaf trees and green fir trees. Back of the meadow loomed a mountain wall, and in this wall they saw a door of thick boards. Now Abbot Hans understood that they had arrived, and dismounted. The child opened the heavy door for him, and he looked into a poor mountain grotto, with bare stone walls. Robber Mother was seated before a log fire that burned in the middle of the floor. Alongside the walls were beds of virgin pine and moss, and on one of these beds lay Robber Father asleep.

“Come in, you out there!” shouted Robber Mother without rising, “and fetch the horses in with you, so they won’t be destroyed by the night cold.”

Abbot Hans walked boldly into the cave, and the lay brother followed. Here were wretchedness and poverty! and nothing was done to celebrate Christmas. Robber Mother had neither brewed nor baked; she had

neither washed nor scoured. The youngsters were lying on the floor around a kettle, eating; but no better food was provided for them than a watery gruel.

Robber Mother spoke in a tone as haughty and dictatorial as any well-to-do peasant woman. "Sit down by the fire and warm yourself, Abbot Hans," said she; "and if you have food with you, eat, for the food which we in the forest prepare you would n't care to taste. And if you are tired after the long journey, you can lie down on one of these beds to sleep. You need n't be afraid of oversleeping, for I'm sitting here by the fire keeping watch. I shall waken you in time to see that which you have come up here to see."

Abbot Hans obeyed Robber Mother and brought forth his food sack; but he was so fatigued after the journey he was hardly able to eat, and as soon as he could stretch himself on the bed he fell asleep.

The lay brother was also assigned a bed to rest upon, but he did n't dare sleep, as he thought he had better keep his eye on Robber Father to prevent his getting up and capturing Abbot Hans. But gradually fatigue got the better of him, too, and he dropped into a doze.

When he woke up, he saw that Abbot Hans had left his bed and was sitting by the fire talking with Robber Mother. The outlawed robber sat also by the fire.

He was a tall, raw-boned man with a dull, sluggish appearance. His back was turned to Abbot Hans, as though he would have it appear that he was not listening to the conversation.

Abbot Hans was telling Robber Mother all about the Christmas preparations he had seen on the journey, reminding her of Christmas feasts and games which she must have known in her youth, when she lived at peace with mankind. "I'm sorry for your children, who can never run on the village street in holiday dress or tumble in the Christmas straw," he said.

At first Robber Mother answered in short, gruff sentences, but by degrees she became more subdued and listened more intently. Suddenly Robber Father turned toward Abbot Hans and shook his clenched fist in his face. "You miserable monk! did you come here to coax from me my wife and children? Don't you know that I am an outlaw and may not leave the forest?"

Abbot Hans looked him fearlessly in the eye. "It is my purpose to get a letter of ransom for you from Archbishop Absalon," said he. He had hardly finished speaking when the robber and his wife burst out laughing. They knew well enough the kind of mercy a forest robber could expect from Bishop Absalon!

"Oh, if I get a letter of ransom from Absalon,"

said Robber Father, "then I'll promise you that never again will I steal so much as a goose."

The lay brother was annoyed with the robber folk for daring to laugh at Abbot Hans, but on his own account he was well pleased. He had seldom seen the Abbot sitting more peaceful and meek with his monks at Övid than he now sat with this wild robber folk.

Suddenly Robber Mother rose. "You sit here and talk, Abbot Hans," she said, "so that we are forgetting to look at the forest. Now I can hear, even in this cave, how the Christmas bells are ringing."

The words were barely uttered when they all sprang up and rushed out. But in the forest it was still dark night and bleak winter. The only thing they marked was a distant clang borne on a light south wind.

"How can this bell ringing ever awaken the dead forest?" thought Abbot Hans. For now, as he stood out in the winter darkness, he thought it far more impossible that a summer garden could spring up here than it had seemed to him before.

When the bells had been ringing a few moments, a sudden illumination penetrated the forest; the next moment it was dark again, and then the light came back. It pushed its way forward between the stark trees, like a shimmering mist. This much it effected: the darkness merged into a faint daybreak. Then Abbot Hans

saw that the snow had vanished from the ground, as if some one had removed a carpet, and the earth began to take on a green covering. Then the ferns shot up their fronds, rolled like a bishop's staff. The heather that grew on the stony hills and the bog-myrtle rooted in the ground moss dressed themselves quickly in new bloom. The moss-tufts thickened and raised themselves, and the spring blossoms shot upward their swelling buds, which already had a touch of color.

Abbot Hans' heart beat fast as he marked the first signs of the forest's awakening. "Old man that I am, shall I behold such a miracle?" thought he, and the tears wanted to spring to his eyes. Again it grew so hazy that he feared the darkness would once more cover the earth; but almost immediately there came a new wave of light. It brought with it the splash of rivulet and the rush of cataract. Then the leaves of the trees burst into bloom, as if a swarm of green butterflies came flying and clustered on the branches. It was not only trees and plants that awoke, but cross-beaks hopped from branch to branch, and the woodpeckers hammered on the limbs until the splinters fairly flew around them. A flock of starlings from up country lighted in a fir top to rest. They were paradise starlings. The tips of each tiny feather shone

in brilliant reds, and, as the birds moved, they glittered like so many jewels.

Again, all was dark for an instant, but soon there came a new light wave. A fresh, warm south wind blew and scattered over the forest meadow all the little seeds that had been brought here from southern lands by birds and ships and winds, and which could not thrive elsewhere because of this country's cruel cold. These took root and sprang up the instant they touched the ground.

When the next warm wind came along, the blueberries and lignon ripened. Cranes and wild geese shrieked in the air, the bullfinches built nests, and the baby squirrels began playing on the branches of the trees.

Everything came so fast now that Abbot Hans could not stop to reflect on how immeasurably great was the miracle that was taking place. He had time only to use his eyes and ears. The next light wave that came rushing in brought with it the scent of newly ploughed acres, and far off in the distance the milkmaids were heard coaxing the cows — and the tinkle of the sheep's bells. Pine and spruce trees were so thickly coated with red cones that they shone like crimson mantles. The juniper berries changed color every

second, and forest flowers covered the ground till it was all red, blue and yellow.

Abbot Hans bent down to the earth and broke off a wild strawberry blossom, and, as he straightened up, the berry ripened in his hand.

The mother fox came out of her lair with a big litter of black-legged young. She went up to Robber Mother and scratched at her skirt, and Robber Mother bent down to her and praised her young. The horned owl, who had just begun his night chase, was astonished at the light and went back to his ravine to perch for the night. The male cuckoo crowed, and his mate stole up to the nests of the little birds with her egg in her mouth.

Robber Mother's youngsters let out perfect shrieks of delight. They stuffed themselves with wild strawberries that hung on the bushes, large as pine cones. One of them played with a litter of young hares; another ran a race with some young crows, which had hopped from their nest before they were really ready; a third caught up an adder from the ground and wound it around his neck and arm.

Robber Father was standing out on a marsh eating raspberries. When he glanced up, a big black bear stood beside him. Robber Father broke off an osier twig and struck the bear on the nose. "Keep to your

own ground, you!" he said; "this is my turf." Then the huge bear turned around and lumbered off in another direction.

New waves of warmth and light kept coming, and now they brought with them seeds from the star-flower. Golden pollen from rye fields fairly flew in the air. Then came butterflies, so big that they looked like flying lilies. The bee-hive in a hollow oak was already so full of honey that it dripped down on the trunk of the tree. Then all the flowers whose seeds had been brought from foreign lands began to blossom. The loveliest roses climbed up the mountain wall in a race with the blackberry vines, and from the forest meadow sprang flowers as large as human faces.

Abbot Hans thought of the flower he was to pluck for Bishop Absalon; but each new flower that appeared was more beautiful than the others, and he wanted to choose the most beautiful of all.

Wave upon wave kept coming until the air was so filled with light that it glittered. All the life and beauty and joy of summer smiled on Abbot Hans. He felt that earth could bring no greater happiness than that which welled up about him, and he said to himself, "I do not know what new beauties the next wave that comes can bring with it."

But the light kept streaming in, and now it seemed

to Abbot Hans that it carried with it something from an infinite distance. He felt a celestial atmosphere enfolding him, and tremblingly he began to anticipate, now that earth's joys had come, the glories of heaven were approaching.

Then Abbot Hans marked how all grew still; the birds hushed their songs, the flowers ceased growing, and the young foxes played no more. The glory now nearing was such that the heart wanted to stop beating; the eyes wept without one's knowing it; the soul longed to soar away into the Eternal. From far in the distance faint harp tones were heard, and celestial song like a soft murmur, reached him.

Abbot Hans clasped his hands and dropped to his knees. His face was radiant with bliss. Never had he dreamed that even in this life it should be granted him to taste the joys of heaven and to hear angels sing Christmas carols!

But beside Abbot Hans stood the lay brother who had accompanied him. In his mind there were dark thoughts. "This can not be a true miracle," he thought, "since it is revealed to malefactors. This does not come from God but has its origin in witchcraft and is sent hither by Satan. It is the Evil One's power that is tempting us and compelling us to see that which has no real existence."

From afar were heard the sound of angel harps and the tones of a Miserere. But the lay brother thought it was the evil spirits of hell coming closer. "They would enchant and seduce us," sighed he, "and we shall be sold unto perdition."

The angel throng was so near now that Abbot Hans saw their bright forms through the forest branches. The lay brother saw them too; but back of all this wondrous beauty he saw only some dread evil. For him it was the devil who performed these wonders on the anniversary of our Saviour's birth. It was done simply for the purpose of more effectually deluding poor human beings.

All the while the birds had been circling around the head of Abbot Hans, and they let him take them in his hands. But all the animals were afraid of the lay brother; no bird perched on his shoulder, no snake played at his feet. Then there came a little forest dove. When she marked that the angels were nearing, she plucked up courage and flew down on the lay brother's shoulder and laid her head against his cheek.

Then it appeared to him as if sorcery were come right upon him, to tempt and corrupt him. He struck with his hand at the forest dove and cried out in such a loud voice that it rang throughout the forest, "Go thou back to hell, whence thou art come!"

Just then the angels were so near that Abbot Hans felt the feathery touch of their great wings, and he bowed down to earth in reverent greeting.

But when the lay brother's words sounded, their song was hushed and the holy guests turned in flight. At the same time the light and the mild warmth vanished in unspeakable terror for the darkness and cold in a human heart. Darkness sank over the earth, like a coverlet; frost came, all the growths shrivelled up; the animals and birds hastened away; the rushing of streams was hushed; the leaves dropped from the trees, rustling like rain.

Abbot Hans felt how his heart, which had but lately swelled with bliss, was now contracting with insufferable agony. "I can never outlive this," thought he, "that the angels from heaven had been so close to me and were driven away; that they wanted to sing Christmas carols for me and were driven to flight."

Then he remembered the flower he had promised Bishop Absalon, and at the last moment he fumbled among the leaves and moss to try and find a blossom. But he sensed how the ground under his fingers froze and how the white snow came gliding over the ground. Then his heart caused him ever greater anguish. He could not rise, but fell prostrate on the ground and lay there.

When the robber folk and the lay brother had groped their way back to the cave, they missed Abbot Hans. They took brands with them and went out to search for him. They found him dead upon the coverlet of snow.

Then the lay brother began weeping and lamenting, for he understood that it was he who had killed Abbot Hans because he had dashed from him the cup of happiness which he had been thirsting to drain to its last drop.

When Abbot Hans had been carried down to Övid those who took charge of the dead saw that he held his right hand locked tight around something which he must have grasped at the moment of death. When they finally got his hand open, they found that the thing which he had held in such an iron grip was a pair of white root bulbs, which he had torn from among the moss and leaves.

When the lay brother who had accompanied Abbot Hans saw the bulbs, he took them and planted them in Abbot Hans' herb garden.

He guarded them the whole year to see if any flower would spring from them. But in vain he waited through the spring, the summer, and the autumn. Finally, when winter had set in and all the leaves and flowers were dead, he ceased caring for them.

But when Christmas Eve came again, he was so strongly reminded of Abbot Hans that he wandered out into the garden to think of him. And look! as he came to the spot where he had planted the bare root bulbs, he saw that from them had sprung flourishing green stalks, which bore beautiful flowers with silver white leaves.

He called out all the monks at Övid, and when they saw that this plant bloomed on Christmas Eve, when all the other growths were as if dead, they understood that this flower had in truth been plucked by Abbot Hans from the Christmas garden in Göinge forest. Then the lay brother asked the monks if he might take a few blossoms to Bishop Absalon.

And when he appeared before Bishop Absalon, he gave him the flowers and said: "Abbot Hans sends you these. They are the flowers he promised to pick for you from the garden in Göinge forest."

When Bishop Absalon beheld the flowers, which had sprung from the earth in darkest winter, and heard the words, he turned as pale as if he had met a ghost. He sat in silence a moment; thereupon he said, "Abbot Hans has faithfully kept his word, and I shall also keep mine." And he ordered that a letter of ransom be drawn up for the wild robber who was outlawed

and had been forced to live in the forest ever since his youth.

He handed the letter to the lay brother, who departed at once for the Robbers' Cave. When he stepped in there on Christmas Day, the robber came toward him with axe uplifted. "I'd like to hack you monks into bits, as many as you are!" said he. "It must be your fault that Göinge forest did not last night dress itself in Christmas bloom."

"The fault is mine alone," said the lay brother, "and I will gladly die for it; but first I must deliver a message from Abbot Hans." And he drew forth the Bishop's letter and told the man that he was free. "Hereafter you and your children shall play in the Christmas straw and celebrate your Christmas among people, just as Abbot Hans wished to have it," said he.

Then Robber Father stood there pale and speechless, but Robber Mother said in his name, "Abbot Hans has indeed kept his word, and Robber Father will keep his."

When the robber and his wife left the cave, the lay brother moved in and lived all alone in the forest, in constant meditation and prayer that his hard-heartedness might be forgiven him.

But Göinge forest never again celebrated the hour of

our Saviour's birth; and of all its glory, there lives to-day only the plant which Abbot Hans had plucked. It has been named CHRISTMAS ROSE. And each year at Christmastide she sends forth from the earth her green stalks and white blossoms, as if she never could forget that she had once grown in the great Christmas garden at Göinge forest.

XIII

THE TWO FROGS
JAPANESE FAIRY TALE

XIII

THE TWO FROGS ¹

ONCE upon a time in the country of Japan there lived two frogs, one of whom made his home in a ditch near the town of Osaka, on the sea coast, while the other dwelt in a clear little stream which ran through the city of Kioto. At such a great distance apart, they had never even heard of each other; but, funnily enough, the idea came into both their heads at once that they should like to see a little of the world, and the frog who lived at Kioto wanted to visit Osaka, and the frog who lived at Osaka wished to go to Kioto, where the great Mikado had his palace.

So one fine morning in the spring, they both set out along the road that led from Kioto to Osaka, one from one end and the other from the other.

The journey was more tiring than they expected, for they did not know much about travelling, and half-way between the two towns there rose a mountain which had to be climbed. It took them a long time and a

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great many hops to reach the top, but there they were at last, and what was the surprise of each to see another frog before him! They looked at each other for a moment without speaking, and then fell into conversation, and explained the cause of their meeting so far from their homes. It was delightful to find that they both felt the same wish — to learn a little more of their native country — and as there was no sort of hurry they stretched themselves out in a cool, damp place, and agreed that they would have a good rest before they parted to go their ways.

“What a pity we are not bigger,” said the Osaka frog, “and then we could see both towns from here and tell if it is worth our while going on.”

“Oh, that is easily managed,” returned the Kioto frog. “We have only got to stand up on our hind legs, and hold on to each other, and then we can each look at the town he is travelling to.”

This idea pleased the Osaka frog so much that he at once jumped up and put his front paws on the shoulder of his friend, who had risen also. There they both stood, stretching themselves as high as they could, and holding each other tightly, so that they might not fall down. The Kioto frog turned his nose towards Osaka, and the Osaka frog turned his nose towards Kioto; but the foolish things forgot that when they

stood up their great eyes lay in the backs of their heads, and that though their noses might point to the places to which they wanted to go, their eyes beheld the places from which they had come.

“Dear me!” cried the Osaka frog; “Kioto is exactly like Osaka. It is certainly not worth such a long journey. I shall go home.”

“If I had had any idea that Osaka was only a copy of Kioto I should never have travelled all this way,” exclaimed the frog from Kioto, and as he spoke, he took his hands from his friend’s shoulders and they both fell down on the grass.

Then they took a polite farewell of each other, and set off for home again, and to the end of their lives they believed that Osaka and Kioto, which are as different to look at as two towns can be, were as like as two peas.

XIV

THE OLD HAG OF THE FOREST

(Adapted)

BY SEUMAS MACMANUS

XIV

THE OLD HAG OF THE FOREST ¹

ONCE upon a time, long long ago, when there were more kings and queens in Ireland than O'Donnell's old castle has windows, and when witches and enchantments were as plentiful as blackthorn bushes, there was a king and a queen with three sons, and to every one of these sons the queen had given a hound, a hawk and a filly. The filly could overtake anything, the hound could catch anything it pursued on dry land, and the hawk could come up with anything in the air or in the water. In the course of time, when these three lads had grown up to be fine, able, strapping young men, the eldest said one day that he would go away to seek his fortune. The king and the queen were vexed at this, and urged him not to go, but it was of no use, so asking their blessing, he mounted the filly, and, with the hawk on his shoulder, and the hound at his heels, set out. He told them as he was starting, to watch, from day to day, the water that

¹ Story taken from Seumas MacManus' volume, "In Chimney Corners," published by Doubleday, Page and Company.

settled in the filly's hoof-tracks outside the gate, "for," said he, "as long as that water keeps clear I'm all right; but when you see it frothing, I'm fighting a hard battle; and if ever you see it turn bloody I'm either dead or under enchantment." So with the hound, the hawk and the filly, he travelled away, further than I could tell you and twice further than you could tell me, till at last one evening late he came in sight of a great castle. He pulled up his filly, and, looking about him, he saw a small wee house nearby, which he entered and found only one old woman in it. It was a very neat and clean little house. "Good evening, young gentleman," said the woman. "Good evening," said he. "Can I have lodging for the night for myself, my hound, my hawk, and my filly?" "Well, for yourself, you can," said the old woman, "but I don't like those other animals so you can house them outside." Very well and good, he agreed to this. When the old woman was getting his supper for him she said she supposed he came for the big fight on the morrow. He asked her, "What big fight?" "Oh," said she, "is that all you know about it?" Then she began to tell him how the king's daughter of the castle beyond was to be killed by a great giant the next day unless there was a man there able to beat the giant, and to any man that would fight and overcome him the king was

to give his daughter in marriage and the weight of herself three times over in gold.

“Oh,” said he, “I’ll find something better to do. I’ll not go near it.”

The next morning he was up early and pretended he was going away to hunt. But did n’t he go instead to the king’s castle, and, there he saw no end of a crowd gathered together from the four winds of the world, some of them hoping to fight the giant and win the king’s daughter, and more of them only coming out of curiosity, just to look on. But when the giant made his appearance, and they saw the size of him, not a man of all the warriors there, covered all over as they were in coats of iron mail from the crown of their heads to the soles of their feet, but trembled with fear, for such a terrific giant none of them ever saw before. The brave king’s son waited until he found that none of them present would venture to fight the giant, then out he stepped. Such a fight was never witnessed in Ireland before or since, and he gave the giant enough to do, and the giant gave him enough to do; till at last, when it was going hard with him, he gave one leap into the air, and coming down with his sword right on the giant’s neck, he cut off his head, and then when he had that done he disappeared in the crowd.

After killing some game on the hills he came home and gave it to the old woman for supper. That night when she was serving his supper she told him about the great gentleman that had killed the giant that day, and then disappeared into the air. She said that the giant's brother was to be there the next day to fight anyone that would fight for the king's daughter, and she told him he should go, for it would be well worth seeing.

"Oh," said he, "I'll find something better worth doing—I'll not go near it." So after supper, he went to bed, and was up early in the morning, pretending he was going to hunt, but instead he went off to the castle again. This day the crowd was bigger than ever, and when the giant appeared, if the first giant was terrific, this one was twice as terrific. He could get no man with enough courage to venture to fight him till at length the brave king's son had to step out again and encounter him.

Well, if the fight was hard the first day, it was twice as hard this day, and they fought until at last when the giant was getting the best of him, the king's son took one spring up into the air and landing down with his sword on the giant's neck, he cut the head right off from the body and then again disappeared in the

crowd, and after hunting a while on the hills he came home with plenty of game.

This night, just as the night before, when the old woman was giving him his supper she made great wonders of telling him of the terrific fight that day again between the strange gentleman and the giant, and how he killed the giant and then disappeared right up into the sky before all their eyes.

Then she said that on the next day, the third and last giant was to fight; that this would be a wonderful day, and that he should surely go to see the wonderful gentleman that killed the other two giants. "Oh," said he, "I'll find something better to do — I'll not go near it to look at him."

And the third morning again he went to the castle, pretending that he was going out to hunt. When the third giant appeared, he was far more terrific than the first two put together.

To make a long story short, the brave king's son and the giant went at it, and the fighting was the most terrible ever witnessed before or since, and the short and long of it was that he sprang up at length into the air, coming down on the giant's neck and cutting off his head. Then again he disappeared in the crowd and went home; but as he was disappearing, one of the

king's men snatched the shoe from his foot; so home he had to go that night wanting one shoe. Next day, and for eight days after, the king had all his men out scouring the country far and wide to see if they could find the owner of the shoe; but though they flocked to the castle in thousands, not one of them would the shoe fit. And every one of these days the king's son was out with his filly, his hawk and his hound on the hills hunting. At last one day the old woman went to the castle and told how she had a lodger that came home the night the last giant was killed with one boot wanting. And the next day the king came there himself with a carriage and four horses and took the king's son away to his castle and there when they tried the boot on him, it fit as if it was made for his foot; and the king gave him his daughter, and the marriage was performed, and the whole gentry and nobility of all the land was invited in to a big feast. But, lo and behold, on that very night when all the spree was going on, and the fun was at its height in the ballroom, and all were as busy as bees in the kitchen, what should happen but at that very instant there came to the kitchen window a hare, and put in its head and commenced licking a plate of some particular nice dainty that was cooling inside the window. The cook was so enraged at one of her very best dishes being de-

stroyed that she got up in a passion and said it was a nice thing that with a hero in the house who had killed giants, an old hare would be allowed to come in and spoil her cooking. This word soon came to the groom's ears in the ball-room, and though the king and the queen and the bride and all the nobility and gentry tried to persuade him against it he would n't stop, and there was no holding him. He said he would n't sleep two nights in one bed, or eat two meals' meat in one house, till he would catch that hare and bring it back dead or alive.

So mounting his filly, and taking with him his hawk and his hound, he started off hot-foot in pursuit. He pursued the hare all that night and all the next day, and at evening, late, he came to a little wee house he saw in a hollow, and went in, for he was tired, and determined to rest that night.

As he was warming himself by the fire, with his hound, his hawk and his filly, he heard a noise at the wee window of the house and there he saw a dirty wizened old hag of a woman, trembling and shaking down to her very finger tips. "Oh, oh, oh, it's cold cold, cold," said she, and her teeth rattled in her head.

"Why don't you come in and warm yourself?" said he.

"Oh, I can't, I can't, I'm afraid of those wild ani-

mals of yours. But here," said she, pulling three long hairs out of her head, and handing them in at the window to him, "here are three of the ropes we used to have in old times, and if you tie those wild beasts of yours with them then I'll go in."

He took the three hairs and tied the hawk, the hound and the filly with them, and then the old hag came in, but she was trembling no longer, and she said with her eyes flashing fire, "Do you know who I am? They call me the Old Hag of the Forest, and it was my three sons you killed to win the king's daughter, but you'll pay dearly for it now." With that he drew his sword, and the hag drew another, and both of them fell to it, and I could n't be able to describe to you the terrible fight they had. But at length the Old Hag of the Forest was getting too much for him, and he had to call on the help of the hound. "Hound, hound," said he, "where are you at my command?" And at this "Hair, hair," said the old hag, "hold tight." "Oh," said the hound, "it's hard for me to do anything and my throat a-cutting." Then he called on the hawk. "Hawk, hawk," said he, "where are you at my command?" And, "Hair, hair," said the old hag, "hold tight." "Oh," said the hawk, "it's hard for me to do anything and my throat a-cutting." And then he called on the filly. "Filly, filly," said he, "where

are you at my command?" "Hair, hair," said the old hag, "hold tight." "Oh," said the filly, "it's hard for me to do anything and my throat a-cutting."

So the end of it all was that the hag overcame him, and then taking out of her pocket a little white rod she struck him with it, and turned him into a gray rock, just outside her door, and then striking the hound, the hawk and the filly she turned them into white rocks just beside him.

Now, at home, they watched the water in the filly's hoof tracks as regularly as the sun rose, day after day, till at last one day they saw the water in the hoof tracks frothing, and they said he was fighting a hard battle; and so he was for that was the very day he and the first giant had the encounter. Next day it was frothing more than ever, for that was the day he was fighting the second giant, and on the third day the water frothed right up out of the tracks, and then they knew that he was fighting a desperate battle; and sure enough he and the third giant were at it hard and fast at the same instant. But at length they found the water turning to blood and they thought he must be killed. So the next morning the second brother set out and he said he would n't sleep two nights in the one bed nor eat two meals of meat in the one house till he'd find out what happened to his brother. He took his

hound, his hawk and his filly with him and he traveled on and on, far further than I could tell you, and twice further than you could tell me, till at length one evening, late, did n't he come to the very wee house near the castle where his brother had put up before him. And when he came in, the old woman that was in the house flew at him and kissed him and welcomed him back with a hundred welcomes ten times over, for he was so like his brother she was sure it was he. Then she told him that they were all waiting for him anxiously at the castle, expecting him back every day, and that he should lose no time in going to them, for that the bride in particular was very down-hearted since he had gone away, thinking that she'd never see him again. He started off at once for the castle to find it all out, and there was welcome and rejoicing, and the pretty king's daughter covered him all over with kisses and there was a great spread, and all the gentry and nobility were asked in. But that night again, what should happen but the hare came a second time, and spoiled the cook's best dish, and drove the cook into a frightful rage, and—"It's a nice thing indeed," said the cook, "that with a hero in the house that slew three giants a hare would be allowed to come in and spoil my very choicest dish, and then go off with

itself scot free!" This word came to the new groom in the ball-room, and "By this and by that," said he, "I won't stop till I go after that hare, and I'll never stop two nights or eat two meals in the one house 'till I bring him back dead or alive."

So, off he started, with the hound, the hawk and the filly; and all that night and the next day he pursued the hare. Late the next evening when he was feeling tired and not able to follow any further he saw in the hollow below him a little house, and drawing up to it, he went in and was warming himself by the fire with his hound, his hawk and his filly about him, when he heard a noise at the window and there he saw an old hag quaking and shaking all over. "Oh, oh, oh, it's cold, cold, cold," said she, trembling all over.

"Why don't you come in and warm yourself?" said he.

"Oh, I could n't go in, for I'm afraid of those wild animals of yours. But here," said she, pulling three long hairs out of her head, "here are three of the kind of ropes we used to use long ago. Tie your animals with them, and then I'll go in."

He took the hairs and tied the hound, the hawk and the filly with them, and then the old hag came in. She was not trembling at all now, but with her eyes flash-

ing fire, she said, "Your brother killed my three sons, and I made him pay dearly for it, and I'll make you pay dearly too."

With that she drew a sword, and he drew a sword, and both of them fought hard, but the hag was too much for him, so at length he had to call on the hound. "Hound, hound," said he, "where are you at my command?" Said the old hag, "Hair, hair, hold tight." "Oh," said the hound, "how could I do anything and my throat a-cutting?" Then he called to the hawk, "Hawk, hawk, where are you at my command?" "Hair, hair," said the old hag, "hold tight!" "Oh," answered the hawk, "how could I do anything with my throat a-cutting?" Then he called on his filly. "Filly, filly," he said, "where are you at my command?" "Hair, hair," said the old hag, "hold tight." "Oh," said the filly, "how could I do anything with my throat a-cutting?"

So the end of it all was that again the hag got the better of him, and, taking a wee bit of a white rod from her pocket she struck him with it, and turned him into another gray stone outside the door, and then struck the hound, the hawk and the filly, and turned them into three white stones just beside him.

Now, at home as before, they were watching his filly's hoof tracks every day regularly, and everything

went well till at last one day they saw the water in them turn bloody and then they were afraid he was killed. The very next morning the youngest son, Jack, said, "I'll start off with my hound, my hawk and my filly, and won't sleep two nights in one bed or eat two meals in the one house till I find what has happened to my two older brothers."

So off he started — with his filly, his hawk and his hound — and he traveled and traveled away, far further than you could tell me or I could tell you, till he came in sight of the very same castle his two brothers reached before him, and drawing up to the wee hut he saw near it, he went in, and the old woman jumped and threw her arms about his neck, and welcomed him home with a hundred thousand welcomes, and told him it was a poor thing to go away and leave his bride the way he did, twice, and that she was down-hearted wondering what had become of him, or happened to him.

Then she hurried brave Jack off to the castle. There they welcomed him and the rejoicing was great because he had come back again. And this time just as before, the great feast was given, and the gentry and nobility all asked in to it, and the play was at its height when the word came to the ball-room once more about the unmannerly hare spoiling the cook's best dish the

third time, and how the cook said it was a nice thing indeed, that such a thing would be allowed, with a hero in the house who had slain three giants.

Without more ado, brave Jack insisted on starting off and there was no holding him, for he said he was bound to bring back that hare, dead or alive. So off Jack started with his hawk, his hound and his filly, and he had a sort of notion that this same hare was nothing good, and that it was the one which led his two brothers astray, whatever had happened to them. He traveled on, and on, and on, for that night and all the next day, and never caught up with the hare, till at length, late that evening, he saw before him the same wee hut in the hollow that his brothers had come to, and Jack drew up too.

After he had been in the cabin some time with his hound, his hawk and his filly, he heard a noise at the window, and there he saw the old hag trembling and shaking and quaking, and "Oh, oh, oh, but it's cold, cold, cold," said she. "And why," said he, "don't you come in and warm yourself?" "Oh, I'm afraid of those wild animals of yours." "But here," said she, taking out of her head three hairs, "Here are three of the kind of ropes we used to use in the old times, so tie your animals with them, and then I'll go in."

Jack took the three hairs from her, and, pretending to tie the hound, the hawk and the filly with them, he threw them instead into the fire. Then the old hag came in, her eyes blazing in her head, and, drawing a sword, she rushed at Jack to have his life. And Jack drew his sword and rushed at her, and both of them fell to it, and they fought long and they fought hard, till at length, Jack, finding the hag getting too much for him, called on his hound. "Hound, hound, where are you at my command?" "Hair, hair," said the old hag, "hold tight!" "Oh," said the hair, "it's hard for me to do good while I'm burning in the fire." And then Jack called on his hawk. "Hawk, hawk, where are you at my command?" "Hair, hair," said the old hag, "hold tight." "Oh," answered the hair, "it's hard for me to do good while I'm burning in the fire." Then Jack called on his filly. "Filly, filly, where are you at my command?" "Hair, hair," said the old hag, "hold tight." "Oh," answered the hair, "it's hard for me to do good while I'm burning in the fire."

So the hound, the hawk and the filly all rallied to brave Jack's aid, and they got hold of the hag by the heels and would n't let her go in spite of all she could do. Then she cried, "Mercy, mercy, spare my life and I'll give you back your two brothers." "All

right," said Jack, "tell me where they are, and how I'm to get them."

"Do you see those two gray stones," said she, "outside the door, with three smaller white ones round each of them?"

"I do," said Jack.

"Well," said she, "the gray stones are your brothers, and the others are their hounds, hawks and fillies; and if you take water from the well at the foot of that tree below the house, and sprinkle three drops of it on each of those stones, they'll all be disenchanting again."

Jack, you may suppose, did n't lose much time in doing this, and lo and behold, from the stones came up his two brothers, each one of them with his hound, his hawk, and his filly, just the same as they were before they had been enchanted by the Old Hag of the Forest, and that was the meeting and the greeting between Jack and his lost brothers whom he thought he'd never see again!

But off they soon started, all of them, with their hounds, their hawks and their fillies, away back for the castle again, and the eldest brother got his bride and the feast was spread this time again and all the gentry and nobility of both that and the surrounding countries came to attend it and do honor to the bride and groom; and such a time for eating, drinking, dancing,

singing, fun and amusement was never seen before or since.

Afterwards Jack and the second brother started away for home with their hounds, their hawks and their fillies with them and as much gold as they could carry.

XV

HOW THE ANIMALS SECURED FIRE

BY KATHARINE CHANDLER

XV

HOW THE ANIMALS SECURED FIRE

A LONG, long time ago all the fire on the earth was owned by two old women. They kept it in a little mat house and would not let a spark escape. The animal people were shivering with cold and were sick from their raw food, so they journeyed two moons to the little mat house and begged the old woman to give them a firebrand.

But the old women only muttered, "No, no," and crouched closer to their fire.

Then the animals begged earnestly: "Oh, lend us a brand just for a few minutes. Our teeth are chattering and our stomachs refuse the uncooked meat. We pray you, Old Women, lend us a fire-brand."

But the old women muttered, "No, no," and hugged their fire closer.

Then the animals piled all their treasures together, — shells from the seashore, cones from the mountains, bows from the oak tree, and arrows from the volcanic region. They carried them to the old women's door. "Old Women," they cried, "here are all our treasures. Take them and give us one burning fagot."

Still the old women muttered, "No, no," and covered their fire with their stooping bodies.

The animals went shivering home. They found Coyote and besought him to think of some way to get them fire.

Coyote thought and thought. Then he said: "It will be a hard struggle to get it safe to our own country. Summon every animal and then station yourselves along the route to the old women's house, each one a half sun's distance from the other. The strongest and swiftest must stand nearest the little mat house. Let each one be ready to run swiftly in his turn with the fire-brand. Bear will hide himself outside the old women's home. I will go in. When I signal to him, he will make a rush and frighten them."

Coyote went to the little mat house and knocked at the door. The old women opened it. "Good morning," said Coyote in his politest voice. "May I come in and warm my feet? They are very cold."

The old women muttered, "Yes, yes."

When Coyote's toes were all flexible again, he coughed. Bear rushed in with a growl and dashed toward the old women. As they tried to protect themselves, Coyote snatched a blazing brand and fled.

But the old women were swift of foot, and as Coyote ran on with lolling tongue and panting breath, they

sped after him. Just as he was beginning to slacken his pace, he reached Panther.

Panther seized the brand and bounded onward. The old women followed close. As Panther began to get weary, he arrived at Elk's station. Elk speeded like the wind, but still the old women followed close behind. Then Fox carried the stolen fire on a space, and so on in turn the animals kept up their flight, with the old women always close behind.

At last the fire brand had been carried from one animal to another across the cold country until bushy-tailed Squirrel was reached, and he was the next-to-the-last animal. As he seized the brand, the old women made a dash at him. He was so frightened that he almost dropped it, and in catching it firmly again, his tail caught fire. He curled his tail over his back, and it burned a black place between his shoulders. Down to this very day the squirrel has a black spot between his shoulders.

When Squirrel could run no more, he tossed the brand to the last animal in the line. This was poor little Squatty Frog. He never was much of a runner, but he did his best, hopping frantically along. The rough stones cut all his tail away; yet he managed to reach the bank of the river, on the other side of which lay the animals' country. Here the old women over-

took him and tried to snatch both the brand and poor Frog. The brand had dwindled down to a tiny spark during this long race, so Frog just swallowed it and dived into the river. He swam under water to the other side and there spat out the fire on pieces of wood.

Poor Frog! He suffered in the struggle. Never since that day has his tail grown again. Then, too, the brand burned away one of his vocal chords, so that he no longer rivals the birds as he once did. That is why he dislikes fire and even to this day keeps far away from it.

From that time fire has dwelt in wood, and by rubbing two twigs together the animals can always get enough to make themselves comfortable.

XVI

THE COMING OF THE PRINCE

(A Christmas Story)

BY EUGENE FIELD

XVI

THE COMING OF THE PRINCE

I

WHIRR-R-R! whirr-r-r! whirr-r-r!" said the wind, and it tore through the streets of the city that Christmas eve, turning umbrellas inside out, driving the snow in fitful gusts before it, creaking the rusty signs and shutters, and playing every kind of rude prank it could think of.

"How cold your breath is to-night!" said Barbara, with a shiver, as she drew her tattered little shawl the closer around her benumbed body.

"Whirr-r-r! whirr-r-r! whirr-r-r!" answered the wind; "but why are you out in this storm? You should be at home by the warm fire."

"I have no home," said Barbara; and then she sighed bitterly, and something like a tiny pearl came in the corner of one of her sad blue eyes.

But the wind did not hear her answer, for it had hurried up the street to throw a handful of snow in the face of an old man who was struggling along with a huge basket of good things on each arm.

"Why are you not at the cathedral?" asked a snowflake, as it lighted on Barbara's shoulder. "I heard grand music, and saw beautiful lights there as I floated down from the sky a moment ago."

"What are they doing at the cathedral?" inquired Barbara.

"Why, have n't you heard?" exclaimed the snowflake. "I supposed everybody knew that the prince was coming to-morrow."

"Surely enough; this is Christmas eve," said Barbara, "and the prince will come to-morrow."

Barbara remembered that her mother had told her about the prince, how beautiful and good and kind and gentle he was, and how he loved the little children; but her mother was dead now, and there was none to tell Barbara of the prince and his coming,—none but the little snowflake.

"I should like to see the prince," said Barbara, "for I have heard he was very beautiful and good."

"That he is," said the snowflake. "I have never seen him, but I heard the pines and the firs singing about him as I floated over the forest to-night."

"Whirr-r-r! whirr-r-r!" cried the wind, returning boisterously to where Barbara stood. "I've been looking for you everywhere, little snowflake! So come with me."

And without any further ado, the wind seized upon the snowflake and hurried it along the street and led it a merry dance through the icy air of the winter night.

Barbara trudged on through the snow and looked in at the bright things in the shop windows. The glitter of the lights and the sparkle of the vast array of beautiful Christmas toys quite dazzled her. A strange mingling of admiration, regret, and envy filled the poor little creature's heart.

"Much as I may yearn to have them, it cannot be," she said to herself, "yet I may feast my eyes upon them."

"Go away from here!" said a harsh voice. "How can the rich people see all my fine things if you stand before the window? Be off with you, you miserable little beggar!"

It was the shopkeeper, and he gave Barbara a savage box on the ear that sent her reeling into the deeper snowdrifts of the gutter.

Presently she came to a large house where there seemed to be much mirth and festivity. The shutters were thrown open, and through the windows Barbara could see a beautiful Christmas-tree in the centre of a spacious room—a beautiful Christmas-tree ablaze with red and green lights, and heavy with toys and stars and glass balls and other beautiful things that

children love. There was a merry throng around the tree, and the children were smiling and gleeful, and all in that house seemed content and happy. Barbara heard them singing, and their song was about the prince who was to come on the morrow.

“This must be the house where the prince will stop,” thought Barbara. “How I would like to see his face and hear his voice! — yet what would he care for *me*, a ‘miserable little beggar’?”

So Barbara crept on through the storm, shivering and disconsolate, yet thinking of the prince.

“Where are you going?” she asked of the wind as it overtook her.

“To the cathedral,” laughed the wind. “The great people are flocking there, and I will have a merry time amongst them, ha, ha, ha!”

And with laughter the wind whirled away and chased the snow toward the cathedral.

“It is there, then, that the prince will come,” thought Barbara. “It is a beautiful place, and the people will pay him homage there. Perhaps I shall see him if I go there.”

So she went to the cathedral. Many folk were there in their richest apparel, and the organ rolled out its grand music, and the people sang wondrous songs, and

the priests made eloquent prayers; and the music, and the songs, and the prayers were all about the prince and his expected coming. The throng that swept in and out of the great edifice talked always of the prince, the prince, the prince, until Barbara really loved him very much for all the gentle words she heard the people say of him.

“Please, can I go and sit inside?” inquired Barbara of the sexton.

“No!” said the sexton gruffly, for this was an important occasion with the sexton, and he had no idea of wasting words on a beggar child.

“But I will be very good and quiet,” pleaded Barbara. “Please may I not see the prince?”

“I have said no, and I mean it,” retorted the sexton. “What have you for the prince, or what cares the prince for you? Out with you, and don’t be blocking up the door-way!” So the sexton gave Barbara an angry push, and the child fell half-way down the icy steps of the cathedral. She began to cry. Some great people were entering the cathedral at the time, and they laughed to see her falling.

“Have you seen the prince?” inquired a snowflake, alighting on Barbara’s cheek. It was the same little snowflake that had clung to her shawl an hour ago,

when the wind came galloping along on his boisterous search.

“ Ah, no ! ” sighed Barbara in tears ; “ but what cares the prince for *me* ? ”

“ Do not speak so bitterly,” said the little snowflake. “ Go to the forest and you shall see him, for the prince always comes through the forest to the city.”

Despite the cold, and her bruises, and her tears, Barbara smiled. In the forest she could behold the prince coming on his way ; and he would not see her, for she would hide among the trees and vines.

“ Whirr-r-r, whirr-r-r ! ” It was the mischievous, romping wind once more ; and it fluttered Barbara’s tattered shawl, and set her hair to streaming in every direction, and swept the snowflake from her cheek and sent it spinning through the air.

Barbara trudged toward the forest. When she came to the city gate the watchman stopped her, and held his big lantern in her face, and asked her who she was and where she was going.

“ I am Barbara, and I am going into the forest,” said she boldly.

“ Into the forest ? ” cried the watchman, “ and in this storm ? No, child ; you will perish ! ”

“But I am going to see the prince,” said Barbara. “They will not let me watch for him in the church, nor in any of their pleasant homes, so I am going into the forest.”

The watchman smiled sadly. He was a kindly man; he thought of his own little girl at home.

“No, you must not go to the forest,” said he, “for you would perish with the cold.”

But Barbara would not stay. She avoided the watchman’s grasp and ran as fast as ever she could through the city gate.

“Come back, come back!” cried the watchman; “you will perish in the forest!”

But Barbara would not heed his cry. The falling snow did not stay her, nor did the cutting blast. She thought only of the prince, and she ran straightway to the forest.

II

“What do you see up there, O pine-tree?” asked a little vine in the forest. “You lift your head among the clouds to-night, and you tremble strangely as if you saw wondrous sights.”

“I see only the distant hill-tops and the dark clouds,” answered the pine-tree. “And the wind sings of the

snow-king to-night; to all my questionings he says, 'Snow, snow, snow,' till I am wearied with his refrain."

"But the prince will surely come to-morrow?" inquired the tiny snow-drop that nestled close to the vine.

"Oh, yes," said the vine. "I heard the country folks talking about it as they went through the forest to-day, and they said that the prince would surely come on the morrow."

"What are you little folks down there talking about?" asked the pine-tree.

"We are talking about the prince," said the vine.

"Yes, he is coming on the morrow," said the pine-tree, "but not until the day dawns and it is still all dark in the east."

"Yes," said the fir-tree, "the east is black, and only the wind and the snow issue from it."

"Keep your head out of my way!" cried the pine-tree to the fir; "with your constant bobbing around I can hardly see at all."

"Take *that* for your bad manners," retorted the fir, slapping the pine-tree savagely with one of her longest branches.

The pine-tree would put up with no such treatment,

so he hurled his largest cone at the fir; and for a moment or two it looked as if there were going to be a serious commotion in the forest.

"Hush!" cried the vine in a startled tone; "there is some one coming through the forest."

The pine-tree and the fir stopped quarreling, and the snow-drop nestled closer to the vine, while the vine hugged the pine-tree very tightly. All were greatly alarmed.

"Nonsense!" said the pine-tree, in a tone of assumed bravery. "No one would venture into the forest at such an hour."

"Indeed! and why not?" cried a child's voice. "Will you not let me watch with you for the coming of the prince?"

"Will you not chop me down?" inquired the pine-tree gruffly.

"Will you not tear me from my tree?" asked the vine.

"Will you not pluck my blossoms?" plaintively piped the snowdrop.

"No, of course not," said Barbara; "I have come only to watch with you for the prince."

Then Barbara told them who she was, and how cruelly she had been treated in the city, and how she

longed to see the prince, who was to come on the morrow. And as she talked, the forest and all therein felt a great compassion for her.

“Lie at my feet,” said the pine-tree, “and I will protect you.”

“Nestle close to me, and I will chafe your temples and body and limbs till they are warm,” said the vine.

“Let me rest upon your cheek, and I will sing you my little songs,” said the snowdrop.

And Barbara felt very grateful for all these lovely kindnesses. She rested in the velvety snow at the foot of the pine-tree, and the vine chafed her body and limbs, and the little flower sang sweet songs to her.

“Whirr-r-r! whirr-r-r!” There was that noisy wind again, but this time it was gentler than it had been in the city.

“Here you are, my little Barbara,” said the wind, in kindly tones. “I have brought you the little snowflake. I am glad you came away from the city, for the people are proud and haughty there; oh, but I will have my fun with them!”

Then, having dropped the little snowflake on Barbara’s cheek, the wind whisked off to the city again. And we can imagine that it played rare pranks with

the proud, haughty folk on its return; for the wind, as you know, is no respecter of persons.

"Dear Barbara," said the snowflake, "I will watch with thee for the coming of the prince."

And Barbara was glad, for she loved the little snowflake, that was so pure and innocent and gentle.

"Tell us, O pine-tree," cried the vine, "what do you see in the east? Has the prince yet entered the forest?"

"The east is full of black clouds," said the pine-tree, "and the winds that hurry to the hill-tops sing of the snow."

"But the city is full of brightness," said the fir. "I can see the lights in the cathedral, and I can hear wondrous music about the prince and his coming."

"Yes, they are singing of the prince in the cathedral," said Barbara sadly.

"But we shall see him first," whispered the vine reassuringly.

"Yes, the prince will come through the forest," said the little snow-drop gleefully.

"Fear not, dear Barbara, we shall behold the prince in all his glory," cried the snowflake.

Then all at once there was a strange hubbub in the forest; for it was midnight, and the spirits came from

their hiding-places to prowl about and to disport themselves. Barbara beheld them all in great wonder and trepidation, for she had never before seen the spirits of the forest, although she had often heard of them. It was a marvelous sight.

"Fear nothing," whispered the vine to Barbara,—
"fear nothing, for they dare not touch you."

The antics of the wood-spirits continued but an hour; for then a cock crowed, and immediately thereafter, with a wondrous scurrying, the elves and the gnomes and the other grotesque spirits sought their abiding-places in the caves and in the hollow trunks and under the loose bark of the trees. Then it was very quiet once more in the forest.

"It is very cold," said Barbara, "my hands and my feet are like ice."

Then the pine-tree and the fir shook down the snow from their broad boughs, and the snow fell upon Barbara and covered her like a white mantle.

"You will be warm now," said the vine, kissing Barbara's forehead. And Barbara smiled.

Then the snowdrop sang a lullaby about the moss that loved the violet. And Barbara said, "I am going to sleep; will you wake me when the prince comes through the forest?"

And they said they would. So Barbara fell asleep.

III

"The bells in the city are ringing merrily," said the fir, "and the music in the cathedral is louder and more beautiful than before. Can it be that the prince has already come into the city?"

"No," cried the pine-tree, "look to the east and see the Christmas day a-dawning! The prince is coming, and his pathway is through the forest."

The storm had ceased. Snow lay upon all the earth. The hills, the forest, the city, and the meadows were white with the robe the storm-king had thrown over them. Content with his wondrous work, the storm-king himself had fled to his far Northern home before the dawn of the Christmas day. Everything was bright and sparkling and beautiful. And most beautiful was the great hymn of praise the forest sang that Christmas morning,—the pine-trees and the firs and the vines and the snow-flowers that sang of the prince and of his promised coming.

"Wake up, little one," cried the vine, "for the prince is coming!"

But Barbara slept; she did not hear the vine's soft calling nor the lofty music of the forest.

A little snow-bird flew down from the fir-tree's bough and perched upon the vine, and carolled in Bar-

bara's ear of the Christmas morning and of the coming of the prince. But Barbara slept; she did not hear the carol of the bird.

"Alas!" sighed the vine. "Barbara will not awaken, and the prince is coming."

Then the vine and the snowdrop wept, and the pine-tree and the fir were very sad.

The prince came through the forest clad in royal raiment and wearing a golden crown. Angels came with him, and the forest sang a great hymn unto the prince, such a hymn as had never before been heard on earth. The prince came to the sleeping child and smiled upon her and called her by name.

"Barbara, my little one," said the prince, "awaken, and come with me."

Then Barbara opened her eyes and beheld the prince. And it seemed as if a new life had come to her, for there was warmth in her body and a flush upon her cheeks and a light in her eyes that were divine. And she was clothed no longer in rags, but in white flowing raiment; and upon the soft brown hair there was a crown like those which angels wear. And as Barbara arose and went to the prince, the little snowflake fell from her cheek upon her bosom, and forthwith became a pearl more precious than all other jewels upon earth.

And the prince took Barbara in his arms and blessed her, and turning round about, returned with the little child unto his home, while the forest and the sky and the angels sang a wondrous song.

The city waited for the prince, but he did not come. None knew of the glory of the forest that Christmas morning, nor of the new life that came to little Barbara.

Come thou, dear Prince, oh, come to us this holy Christmas time! Come to the busy marts of earth, the quiet homes, the noisy streets, the humble lanes; come to us all, and with thy love touch every human heart, that we may know that love, and in its blessed peace bear charity to all mankind!

XVII

LEGEND OF TU-TOK-A-NU-LA
INDIAN MYTH

XVII

LEGEND OF TU-TOK-A-NU-LA

THERE were once two little boys living in the valley, who went down to the river to swim. After paddling and splashing about to their hearts' content, they went on shore and crept upon a huge boulder that stood beside the water, on which they lay down in the warm sunshine to dry themselves. Very soon they fell asleep, and slept so soundly that they never wakened more. Through moons and snows, winter and summer, they slumbered on. Meantime the great rock whereon they slept was treacherously rising day and night, little by little, until it soon lifted them up beyond the sight of their friends, who sought them everywhere, weeping. Thus they were borne up at last beyond all human help or reach of human voice; lifted up into the blue heavens, far up, far up, until their faces touched the moon; and still they slumbered and slept, year after year, safe among the clouds.

Then, upon a time, all the animals assembled together to bring down the little boys from the top of

the great rock. Every animal made a spring up the face of the wall as far as he could leap: The little mouse could only jump up a hand-breadth; the rat, two hand-breadths; the raccoon, a little farther; and so on — the grizzly bear making a mighty leap far up the wall, but falling back like all the others. Last of all the lion tried, and he jumped up farther than any other animal, but he, too, fell down flat on his back.

Then came along an insignificant measuring-worm, which even the mouse could have crushed by treading on it, and began to creep up the rock. Step by step, a little at a time, he measured his way up, until he presently was above the lion's jump, then pretty soon out of sight. So he crawled up and up, through many sleeps, for about one whole snow, and at last he reached the top. Then he took the little boys and came downward as he went up, so bringing them safely to the ground.

And the rock is called the measuring-worm — Tuto-kanula.

XVIII

PINOCCHIO

(In part)

By C. COLLODI



XVIII

PINOCCHIO

GEPETTO'S home consisted of one room on the ground floor. It received light from a window under a staircase. The furniture could not have been more simple,—a broken chair, a hard bed, and a dilapidated table. On one side of the room was a fireplace with wood burning; but the fire was painted, and above it there was also painted a boiling pot with clouds of steam all around it that made it quite real.

As soon as he entered Geppetto began to make a marionette. “What name shall I give him?” he said to himself. “I think I will call him Pinocchio. That name will bring with it good fortune. I have known a whole family called Pinocchio. Pinocchio was the father, Pinocchio was the mother, and the children were called little Pinocchios, and everybody lived well. It was a happy family.”

When he had found the name for the marionette he began to work with a will. He quickly made the forehead, then the hair, and then the eyes. After he

had made the eyes, just imagine how surprised he was to see them look around, and finally gaze at him fixedly! Geppetto, seeing himself looked at by two eyes of wood, said to the head, "Why do you look at me so, eyes of wood?"

No response.

After he had made the eyes he made the nose; but the nose began to grow, and it grew, grew, grew, until it became a great big nose, and Geppetto thought it would never stop. He tried hard to stop it, but the more he cut at it the longer that impertinent nose became.

After the nose he made the mouth. The mouth was hardly finished when it commenced to sing and laugh. "Stop laughing," said Geppetto, vexed; but it was like talking to the wall. "Stop laughing, I tell you," he said again in a loud tone. Then the features began to make grimaces.

Geppetto feigned not to see this impertinence and continued to work. After the mouth he made the chin, then the neck, then the shoulders, then the body, then the arms and hands.

Hardly had he finished the hands when Geppetto felt his wig pulled off. He turned quickly, and what do you think he saw? — his yellow wig in the hands of the marionette! "Pinocchio! give me back my

wig immediately," said the old man. But Pinocchio, instead of giving back the wig, put it on his own head, making himself look half smothered.

At this disobedience Geppetto looked very sad, a thing he had never done before in all his life. Turning to Pinocchio, he said: "Bad little boy! You are not yet finished and already lack respect to your father. Bad, bad boy!" And he dried a tear.

There were now only the legs and feet to make. Scarcely were they finished when they began to kick poor Geppetto. "It is my fault," he said to himself; "I ought to have thought of this at first! Now it is too late!" Then he took the marionette in his arms and placed him on the ground to make him walk. Pinocchio behaved at first as if his legs were asleep and he could not move them. Geppetto led him around the room for some time, showing him how to put one foot in front of the other. When his legs were stretched Pinocchio began to walk and then to run around the room. When he saw the door open he jumped into the street and ran away.

Poor Geppetto ran as fast as he could, but he was not able to catch him; Pinocchio jumped like a rabbit. He made a noise with his wooden feet on the hard road like twenty pair of little wooden shoes.

"Stop him! stop him!" cried Geppetto; but the peo-

ple in the street, seeing the wooden marionette running as fast as a rabbit, stopped to look at it, and laughed, and laughed, and laughed, so that it is really hard to describe how they enjoyed it all.

Finally, through good fortune, a soldier appeared, who, hearing all the noise, thought that some colt had escaped from its master. He planted himself in the middle of the road and with a fixed look determined to catch the runaway. Pinocchio, when he saw the soldier in the road, tried to pass between his legs, but he could not do it. The soldier, scarcely moving his body, seized the marionette by the nose (which was a very ridiculous one, just the size to be seized by a soldier) and consigned him to the hands of Geppetto, who tried to correct him by pulling his ears. But just imagine — when he searched for the ears he could not find them! Do you know why? Because, in the haste of making Pinocchio, he did not finish carving them.

Taking him by the neck, Geppetto led him back saying as he did so, “When we get home I must punish you.”

. . . The next day Pinocchio went to the public school. Just imagine how the little scholars behaved when they saw a marionette in their school! They laughed out loud. Several played jokes on him. One took off his cap; another pulled his coat tails; another

tried to make a mustache under his nose with ink ; and another tied strings to his arms and legs in order to make him dance.

For a little while Pinocchio did not pay much attention to them, but finally, losing patience, he said : “ Take care ! I have not come here to be your buffoon. I respect others and I wish to be respected.”

“ Hurrah for the jester ! He speaks like a book,” shouted the little scamps, bursting forth into laughter. One of them, more impertinent than the others, stretched out his arm and tried to seize Pinocchio by the nose. But he did not have time because Pinocchio thrust his leg suddenly under the desk.

“ Oh, what hard feet he has !” cried the boy, rubbing the lumps that the marionette had made.

“ And what hard elbows !” said another, who for another trick had received a punch in the ribs. The fact is, that after several kicks and elbowings Pinocchio had the good will of all the boys in the school and they began to like him very much.

The school-teacher, too, praised him because he was so attentive, studious, and intelligent,—always the first to enter the school, always the last to get up when it was over. The only mistake he made was that of going with too many companions, among whom were a few who did not care to study. The teacher warned

him daily, and the good Fairy, too, added her words of advice, saying, "Take care, Pinocchio! your companions will sooner or later make you lose your love for study and perhaps will bring misfortune upon you."

"There is no danger of that," replied the marionette, shrugging his shoulders and touching his forehead with his first finger as if he said, "There is much wisdom inside."

. . . Pinocchio promised that in future he would be good. He kept his promise the rest of the year. In fact, at the examination he took the first honors, and the Fairy was so happy that she said to him, "To-morrow you shall have your wish."

"And that is?"

"To-morrow you shall stop being a marionette and become a real boy."

One who never saw Pinocchio cannot imagine how happy he was at this announcement. All his friends and schoolmates were invited to a great collation. The Fairy had prepared two hundred cups and saucers and four hundred little sandwiches buttered inside and out. That day promised to be a great event but —

Unfortunately in the life of a marionette there is always a *but* that spoils everything.

Pinocchio suddenly asked the Fairy's permission to go and invite his friends. The Fairy said: "Go and

invite them, but remember to come back before night. Do you understand?"

"I promise to be back in an hour," he replied.

"Take care, Pinocchio! Boys make promises easily, but sometimes they do not keep them."

"I am not like other boys. And I shall certainly keep this promise."

"We shall see. In case you disobey it will be the worse for you."

"Why?"

"Because boys who do not pay attention to the advice of their parents always meet with misfortune."

"I have had experience," said Pinocchio; "now you will see that I obey."

"We shall see if you speak the truth."

In a little more than an hour all his friends were invited. Some accepted at once; others hesitated until they heard of the good things to eat. Then they said, "We will surely come."

Now you must know that among his companions there was one that he liked best of all. His name was Romeo; but he was nick-named Lamp Wick, because he was as dry as a new lamp wick that people use to light their houses.

Lamp Wick was the most careless and mischievous boy in all the school, but Pinocchio liked him very

much. He went to look for him so as to give him an invitation to the party next day; but he sought in vain. Where could he be? He looked here and there and finally found him under a shed of a country house.

“What are you doing here?” asked Pinocchio.

“I am waiting until it is midnight, so that I can go away.”

“Where are you going?”

“Far away, far away, far away.”

“I have looked for you everywhere.”

“What do you want with me?”

“Have you not heard?”

“What is it?”

“To-morrow I shall no longer be a marionette; I shall become a boy like all the rest.”

“Good luck to you!”

“But I want you to be there.”

“I have told you that I am going away to-night.”

“At what time?”

“Shortly.”

“Where do you go?”

“I am going to live in a new country that is the most beautiful place in all the world. It is a true land of plenty.”

“What do they call it?”

“They call it the ‘Country of Playthings.’ Why won’t you come?”

“I? No, indeed.”

“You are wrong, Pinocchio. Believe me, if you do not go away, you will be sorry. Where can you find a better place for boys? There are no schools; there are no teachers; there are no books. In that pleasant country they never study. On Saturdays you do not go to school here, and there every day is a Saturday except one, which is Sunday. Just think, the vacation begins the first day of January and ends the last day of December! That is the country for me. That is what I think all countries should be like.”

“But how do you pass the days in the Country of Playthings?”

“Why, you play from morning till night. At night you go to bed, and the next morning it is the same thing all over again. How should you like it?”

“Uhm!” said Pinocchio, and he shook his head lightly as if to say, “It is a country that would please me very much.”

“Then you will go with me? Yes or no.”

“No, no, no! I have promised my kind Fairy to become a good boy and I wish to keep my word. The sun is going down and I must hurry. Good-bye and a pleasant journey.”

“Don’t go away so soon. Why do you hurry?”

“Because I told the good Fairy that I would be at home before dark.”

“Wait two minutes.”

“No; it will be too late.”

“Only two minutes.”

“The Fairy will scold me.”

“Let her scold. When she has scolded enough she will stop,” said the little scoundrel Lamp Wick.

“And what are you going to do? Do you go alone or with company?”

“Alone? Why, there will be a hundred boys.”

“Do you go on foot?”

“Oh, no! A little carriage will come soon and take me.”

“How much I would give to see the carriage pass by now!”

“Why?”

“I should like to see you all start.”

“If you will stay here a little while you will see them.”

“No, no! I wish to go home.”

“Oh, wait another two minutes.”

“No; I have waited too long now. The Fairy will worry about me.”

“ Poor Fairy! Does she think that you will be eaten by bats? ”

“ But tell me,” urged Pinocchio, “ you are sure that in that country there is no school? ”

“ Not even the shadow of one.”

“ And no teachers? ”

“ Not one.”

“ And you are never obliged to study? ”

“ Never, never, never! ”

“ What a beautiful country! ” said Pinocchio, his mouth beginning to water. “ I have never been there, but I can imagine all about it.”

“ Why don’t you come along? ”

“ It is useless to tempt me. I have promised to be a good boy and I wish to keep my word.”

“ Well, then, good-bye; remember me to all the scholars.”

“ Good-bye, Lamp Wick. I wish you a good trip and I hope you will meet some nice new friends.”

Having said this, the marionette took two steps toward home; then he stopped and asked, “ But are you sure that there are six Saturdays in the week and only one Sunday? ”

“ I am positive.”

“ And can you say for certain that the vacation be-

gins on the first of January and ends the last day of December? ”

“ I am positive.”

“ What a beautiful country!” said Pinocchio. Presently he made another start and said, “ Then good-bye truly this time, and I wish you a safe journey.”

“ Good-bye.”

“ How soon do you start? ”

“ Shortly now.”

“ Too bad! I think I will wait and see you go.”

“ And the Fairy? ”

“ It is late now, and an hour later will not make much difference.”

“ Poor Pinocchio! and if the Fairy should scold? ”

“ Well, let her scold. When she has scolded enough she will stop.”

In the meantime it became quite dark. Suddenly as they talked they saw moving along the road a little light and heard the tooting of little trumpets so small and fine that they sounded like the buzzing of a mosquito.

“ Here they are!” said Lamp Wick, standing up.

“ Who is it?” asked Pinocchio, in a low voice.

“ It is the carriage that is coming for me. Now will you go? Yes or no.”

“But are you sure,” asked the marionette, “that in that country the boys are not obliged to study?”

“Never, never, never!”

“What a beautiful country it must be!”

Finally the carriage arrived without making the least noise, because the wheels were bound with tow and rags. Twelve little donkeys pulled it; they were of the same size but of different colors. Some were brown, others speckled like pepper and salt, and others were striped with bands of yellow and blue. But the most singular thing about them was this: these twelve pair of donkeys, that is, the twenty-four donkeys, instead of having shoes made of iron, had on their feet white kid boots shaped like a man's.

And the driver? Just imagine a man very fat and round, like a big ball of butter, with an oily smile, a face like an apple, and a thin caressing voice like that of a cat trying to win the affection of its mistress!

As soon as they saw him the boys were tempted to jump into the carriage and start away for the place unknown on the geographical maps,—the Country of Playthings.

The carriage was filled with boys between eight and ten years of age, packed like sardines in a box. They were so closely huddled together that they could hardly breathe. But no one said “Oh!” No one com-

plained. The consolation of knowing that in a few hours they would arrive in a country where there were no books, or schools, or teachers made them happy and resigned, so that they did not feel hurt, or uncomfortable, or hungry, or thirsty.

As soon as the carriage stopped, the fat driver turned to Lamp Wick and with a thousand airs and grimaces said to him, smiling, "Tell me, my pretty lad, do you wish to come with us to the most fortunate country?"

"Indeed I do."

"But I warn you that there is no place inside. As you see, it is full."

"Oh, well," replied Lamp Wick, "if there is no place inside, I will sit on top of the carriage," and he jumped up and sat beside the driver.

"And what about your friend?" said the driver, turning most politely toward Pinocchio. "What will he do? Are you coming with us also?"

"I remain here," replied Pinocchio. "I wish to return home. I prefer to study and to be a good boy."

"What good will that do you?"

"Listen to me, Pinocchio," said Lamp Wick, "come with us and always be happy."

"No, no, no!"

"Come with us and always be happy," said four others.

"Come with us and always be happy," said all the rest.

"And if I go with you, what will the good Fairy say?" asked Pinocchio, who began to feel as if he were being pulled by his sleeve.

"Do not think of that. Think of the country we shall be in. We shall be our own masters and make a fine noise all day long."

Pinocchio did not reply, but gave a sigh; then he gave another sigh; then a third sigh; finally he said: "Give me a place. I will go with you."

"All the places are full," replied the driver; "but if you wish, take my place."

"What will you do?"

"I will walk."

"No, I cannot allow that. I prefer to ride on one of the donkeys," said Pinocchio.

No sooner said than done. He approached the nearest donkey and tried to mount it; but the donkey suddenly raised his hind feet and threw Pinocchio off. Just imagine the impertinent laughter of all those boys who saw it.

Pinocchio, who was very angry, made another jump on the donkey's back. The jump was such a beautiful one that the boys began to laugh and shout, "Long live Pinocchio!" and clap their hands for joy.

When they were ready to start the donkey again raised his hind feet and gave such a strong kick that the marionette was thrown on top of a heap of gravel. The boys again laughed out loud; but the driver, instead of laughing, went to the donkey and seemed to whisper something in his left ear. Then he said to the marionette: "Remount and have no fear. That donkey had a whim in his head, but I have spoken to him and he will be more reasonable."

Pinocchio mounted and the carriage started. While the donkeys galloped along the marionette fancied that he heard a strange voice saying: "Poor simpleton! You wish to do as you please. You will be sorry."

The frightened Pinocchio looked first on one side of the road and then on the other to see whence these words came; but he saw no one. The donkeys galloped, the carriage rolled along, the boys inside slept, Lamp Wick snored like a dormouse, and the driver sang between his teeth:

"All the night they sleep,
And I never . . ."

They made another mile. Again Pinocchio heard the voice. This time it said: "Bear in mind, simpleton, that boys who stop studying and throw away their books and do nothing but play and amuse them-

selves will always come to a bad end. I know it, for I have tried it, but I cannot say any more. You will cry some day as I do now, but then it will be too late."

At these whispered words the marionette was more frightened than ever. He jumped down to the ground and put his ear to the donkey's nose. Imagine how surprised he was when he perceived that the donkey wept just like a little boy! "Mr. Driver," cried Pinocchio, "do you know that this donkey can cry?"

"Let him cry. He will laugh when he has some hay."

"But who taught him to speak?"

"He learned to say a few words in a country where he lived for a little while."

"Poor beast!"

"Do not waste your time pitying a donkey when he cries. Jump on his back and let us go. The night is fresh and the road is long."

Pinocchio obeyed in silence. The carriage moved on, and when the sun came up they arrived at the Country of Playthings.

This country did not resemble any other in the world. The population was composed entirely of boys. The oldest was thirteen years and the youngest not under eight. In the streets there was a noise, a running around, and a blowing of trumpets that would

make your head ache. Everywhere groups of boys played at marbles, at shinny, at ball; some rode on velocipedes and wooden horses; some played hide and seek; others played tag; some sang; others jumped over benches; some walked on their hands with their feet in the air; others tried to kick over their heads; some laughed; some called; some whistled; some made a noise like a hen that has just laid an egg. In fact, there was such a pandemonium that you would have had to put cotton in your ears.

As soon as Pinocchio, Lamp Wick, and all the other newcomers in this country had arrived, they ran around with the others and began to play. Who could have been happier or more contented than they? "Oh, what a beautiful life this is!" said Pinocchio, running after Lamp Wick.

"See; was I not right?" said the latter. "You did not wish to come. To think that you should want to return to the Fairy's house and study! If to-day you are free from all the annoyances of school and its troubles, you should thank me. True friends are the only ones who know how to return favors to one another."

"It is true, Lamp Wick. If to-day I am a free and happy boy, I owe it all to you. Yet the teacher used

to say to me, 'Do not go with Lamp Wick because he is a bad companion.' "

"Poor Teacher!" replied the other, shaking his head.

So they played in the country for five months. They never saw a book; never studied a minute. They played from morning till night. One morning when Pinocchio awoke he was surprised to find what had happened, and it made him very unhappy.

You know that when the marionette was born he had very little ears, so little that you could scarcely see them. Fancy then, how surprised he was, when he put his hand to his head, to find that his ears had grown long! He went quickly in search of a mirror, but finding none he emptied some water into a basin. Then, looking at his reflection, he saw something that he certainly did not expect to see,—two beautiful, long, donkey ears.

I will leave you to imagine the grief, the shame, the desperation of Pinocchio. He cried and screamed and beat his head against the wall; but his ears grew and grew until hair began to show on the tops.

At the sound of his heartrending cries a Dormouse, who lived on the first floor, entered the room. Seeing the marionette in great anguish, he asked eagerly, "What is the matter, my dear little lodger?"

"I am sick, Doormouse; very sick, and with a sickness that alarms me. Do you understand the pulse?"

"A little."

"See, then, if I have a fever."

The Dormouse took Pinocchio's wrist in his paw and, after having tested his pulse, said, "My friend, it grieves me to tell you bad news."

"What is it?"

"You have a bad fever."

"What kind?"

"The donkey fever."

"I do not understand that disease," replied Pinocchio, who really understood very well.

"I will explain it to you. Know, then, that in two or three hours you will be a donkey, a real donkey, like those that pulled the carriage which brought you here."

"Oh, what shall I do? what shall I do?" cried Pinocchio, pulling his ears so hard that it must have hurt him.

"My dear," said the Dormouse, "what are you trying to do? You must know that it is a written decree that those boys who do not wish to study, who hate books and teachers, and who spend the whole day enjoying themselves, end by becoming little donkeys."

“Is that really true?” asked the marionette.

“Of course it is. And now it is of no use to cry. You should always think first.”

“But the fault is not mine. The fault, believe me, is all Lamp Wick’s.”

“Who is Lamp Wick?”

“A friend of mine. I wished to go back to school and be an honor to the good Fairy; but Lamp Wick said to me, ‘In the Country of Playthings no one studies, and we can play from morning till night.’”

“Why did you follow the advice of a bad friend?”

“Why? Because, Dormouse, I am a foolish, heartless marionette. Oh, if I had had a little bit of heart, I should never have left my good Fairy, who loved me like a mamma and did much for me. And by this time I should have been a little boy like all the rest instead of a marionette. Oh, if I had not met Lamp Wick!”

And he walked toward the door. But when he had gone outside he remembered his donkey ears; and, being ashamed of himself, what do you think he invented? He made a dunce cap and, putting it on his head, pulled it down over his ears. Then he went out and looked for Lamp Wick. He looked in the streets, in the square, in the theater, in fact, everywhere; but he could not find him. He asked if any one had seen

him, but no one knew where he was. He then went to his house and knocked at the door.

“Who is there?” asked Lamp Wick from the inside.

“It is I,” replied Pinocchio.

“Wait a little and I will open the door.”

After half an hour the door opened and Pinocchio saw his friend, also in a dunce cap which covered his ears.

At the sight of that cap Pinocchio felt somewhat consoled, and thought to himself, “He has the same trouble and also suffers from donkey fever.”

Feigning not to see anything he asked gayly, “How are you, my dear Lamp Wick?”

“Like a rat in a cake of cheese.”

“Are you telling me the truth?”

“Why should I tell a story?”

“Excuse me; but why do you wear that cap then?”

“A doctor ordered it because my knees hurt. And you, Pinocchio, why do you wear one?”

“The doctor ordered it because I have corns on my feet.”

“Oh, poor Pinocchio!”

“Oh, poor Lamp Wick!”

After these words there was a long silence during which time the two friends looked at each other.

Finally the marionette said in a kind voice, "Raise your cap just a little, will you?"

"Never! And you?"

"Never! You see I have an ear that is very painful."

"So have I."

"You, too? And which ear hurts?"

"Both. And you?"

"Both. Can it be the same malady?"

"I fear so."

"Do you wish to please me, Lamp Wick?"

"With all my heart."

"Let me see your ears."

"Oh, no! First let me see yours."

"No; you ought to do it first."

"No; after you always."

"Then," said the marionette, "let us make a contract."

"All right."

"Let us take off our caps together."

"All right."

"Look out then." And Pinocchio began to count:
"One, two, three!"

At the word "three," the boys took off their caps and threw them into the air. And then they laughed

and laughed until they were compelled to hold their sides.

Suddenly Lamp Wick stopped and, changing color, said to his friend, "Help! oh, help me, Pinocchio!"

"What is the matter?"

"Oh, dear me! I cannot stand up any longer."

"I cannot either," cried Pinocchio.

Even while they were speaking they fell on their hands and began to run around the room on all fours. And while they ran their arms became legs, their faces changed, and their bodies were covered with long hair. But the moment that was most horrible for each unfortunate was when he felt a tail swishing behind him. Overcome by shame and grief, they tried to talk. But they could not do it. Instead of sobs and lamentations there came the bray of a donkey and it sounded like "Y-a, y-a."

In the meantime there was a knock on the door and they heard a voice outside saying:

"Open the door! I am the driver of the carriage that brought you here. Open quickly, or woe be unto you!"

Seeing that the door did not open, the driver gave it a violent kick. It fell and he entered the room saying in his usual oily way, "Good boys! You bray very

well. I recognize your voices and here I am to take you away."

At these words the two little donkeys became quiet. They lowered their heads and ears and put their tails between their legs.

At first the driver patted them and smoothed their hair. After that he pulled out some leather straps and bridled them both. When he had curried them so that they looked like two looking-glasses, he took them to the square in the hope of selling them and making a good trade.

The purchasers soon made their appearance. Lamp Wick was bought by a farmer whose donkey had died the day before from overwork. Pinocchio was bought by the director of a company of clowns and circus men, so that he could be taught to do tricks and capers.

And now, do you understand what the trade of the driver was? That monster, who had a face of milk and honey, went from time to time through the world with a carriage and collected, by promises, all the naughty boys that were tired of books and school. After he had filled his carriage he took them to the Country of Playthings, where they passed all the time in playing and having fun. When these poor deluded boys had played for a certain time they turned into

donkeys, which he led away and sold in the town. By this means he had become very rich,—in fact a millionaire.

What happened finally to Lamp Wick I do not know. I know, however, that Pinocchio led a very hard and weary life.

XIX

THE FOLLY OF PANIC

BY MARIE SHEDLOCK

XIX

THE FOLLY OF PANIC ¹

AND it came to pass that Buddha (to be) was born again as a Lion. Just as he had helped his fellow-men, he now began to help his fellow-animals, and there was a great deal to be done. For instance, there was a little nervous Hare who always was afraid something dreadful was going to happen to her. She was always saying: "Suppose the Earth were to fall in, what would happen to me?" And she said this so often that at last she thought it really was about to happen. One day when she had been saying over and over again, "Suppose the Earth were to fall in, what would happen to me?" she heard a slight noise: it really was only a heavy fruit which had fallen upon a rustling leaf, but the little Hare was so nervous she was ready to believe anything, and she said in a frightened tone: "The Earth is falling in." She ran away as fast as she could go, and presently met an old brother Hare, who said: "Where are you running to, Mistress Hare?"

¹ Story taken from Miss Marie Shedlock's "Eastern Stories and Legends," published by E. P. Dutton and Company.

And the little Hare said: "I have no time to stop and tell you anything. The Earth is falling in, and I am running away."

"The Earth is falling in, is it?" said the old brother Hare, in a tone of astonishment; and he repeated this to *his* brother hare, and *he* to *his* brother hare, and he to *his* brother hare, until at last there were a hundred thousand brother hares, all shouting: "The Earth is falling in." Now presently the bigger animals began to take the cry up. First the deer, and then the sheep, and then the wild boar, and then the buffalo, and then the camel, and then the tiger, and then the elephant.

Now the wise Lion heard all this noise and wondered at it. "There are no signs," he said, "of the Earth falling in. They must have heard something." And then he stopped them all short and said: "What is this you are saying?"

And the Elephant said: "I remarked that the Earth was falling in."

"How do you know this?" asked the Lion.

"Why, now I come to think of it, it was the Tiger that remarked it to me."

And the Tiger said, "I had it from the Camel," and the Camel said, "I had it from the Buffalo." And the buffalo from the wild boar, and the wild boar from

the sheep, and the sheep from the deer, and the deer from the hares, and the hares said: "Oh! *we* heard it from *that* little Hare."

And the Lion said: "Little Hare, *what* made you say that the earth was falling in?"

And the little Hare said: "I *saw* it."

"You saw it?" said the Lion. "Where?"

"Yonder, by that tree."

"Well," said the Lion, "come with me and I will show you how —"

"No, no," said the Hare, "I would not go near that tree for anything, I'm *so* nervous."

"But," said the Lion, "I am going to take you on my back." And he took her on his back, and begged the animals to stay where they were until they returned. Then he showed the little Hare how the fruit had fallen upon the leaf, making the noise that had frightened her, and she said: "Yes, I see — the Earth is *not* falling in." And the Lion said: "Shall we go back and tell the other animals?" And they went back. The little Hare stood before the animals and said: "The Earth is *not* falling in." And all the animals began to repeat this to one another, and they dispersed gradually, and you heard the words more and more softly: "The Earth is *not* falling in," etc., etc., etc., until the sound died away altogether.

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